Government of Bengal

Report on the Administration of Bengal 1925-26

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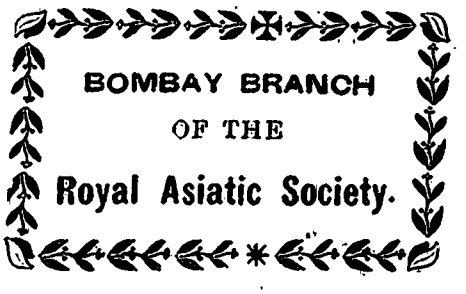

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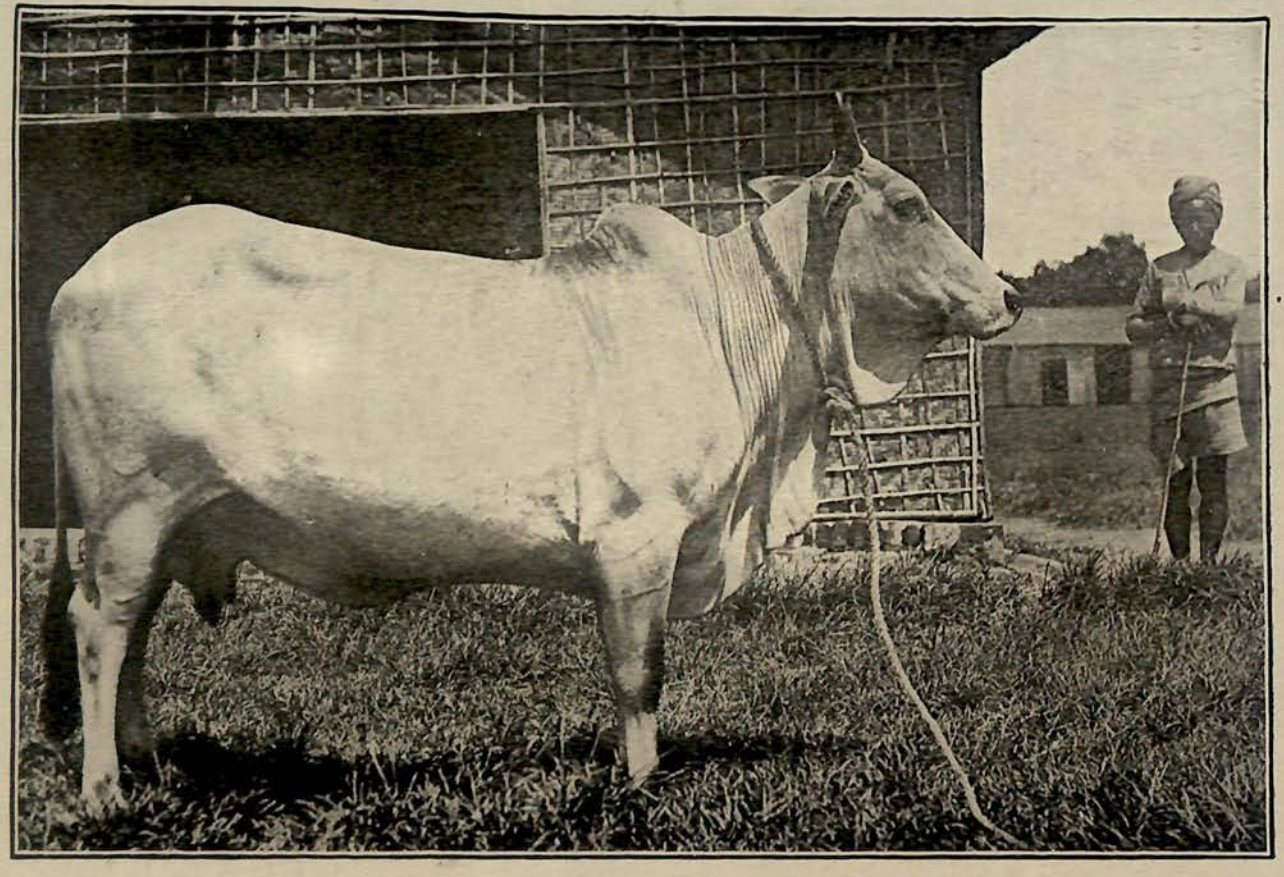


Cross-bred Hansi desi cow. [*Rangpur Cattle Farm.*]

Bengal Administration Report, 1925-26.

Introduction.

The Report is, as usual, divided into two parts. Part I gives a summary of the most notable facts of the financial year under review and in some matters, *e.g.*, the Political conditions, the Press, the Legislative Council, brings the record down to the end of 1926. In Part II, a detailed account is given of the various branches of administration based on departmental reports. Where necessary, references have been given to the more comprehensive Administration Report of 1921-22, for supplementary information.

Part I.—General Summary.

I.—Political Conditions.

1. The year 1926 was remarkable for an intensity of communal feeling among all sections of the Hindus and the Muhammadans never previously experienced in Bengal. The Lucknow pact and the efforts of a few idealists had only concealed a breach which had been recently widening. The Khilafat agitation had fostered aggressive sectarian passions and had inculcated a disregard of law and order where it could be represented that the claims of religion were involved. Upon the abolition of the Khilafat, this exasperated communal self-consciousness remained; unable now to vent itself upon Government, it turned upon the rival community. In this state of feeling the Reformed constitution again served to some extent to increase the estrangement

Communal tension.

between the communities. Apprehensive that a system of popular Government would ultimately mean a Hindu tyranny, the Muhammadans steadily retired from association with the Hindus in the political arena and concentrated on the consolidation of their own ranks. Instead of attempting to allay the distrust of the Muhammadans, the Hindus on the other hand only increased it by various activities. The most effective war cry in India for rousing the masses has always been the slogan that religion is in danger. The mobilisation of Hindu interests under the *Suddhi* and *Sangathan* movements in 1922-23 created almost a panic among the Muhammadans who replied by organising the *Tanzim* and *Tabligh*. Though these movements originated and were principally active in Upper India, they spread also to this Province and influenced the minds of the political classes. The propaganda of the *Hindu Sabha* in Calcutta in 1925 brought the danger nearer home. The frequent occurrence of communal riots in several parts of Northern India since 1922 had also intensified the strain. In December, 1925, Government had announced an intention to reserve for Muhammadans a larger percentage of vacancies in certain Services, but although there was a similar provision in the Bengal pact, Swarajist Hindus not only resented the concession but endeavoured to prevent the discussion in Council of its further extension, and their attitude antagonised the Muhammadans. The bitter struggle in 1924 to depose the two Muhammadan Ministers had also been taken by a section of the Muhammadans as an indication of what they might expect from the Hindus under a popular Government. The reign of undisguised communalism was heralded by the outspoken speech of Sir Abd-ur-Rahim at Aligarh in December, 1925, which for the first time clearly exposed the extent of the breach between the two communities. Few people succeeded thereafter in keeping their head above the rising waves of communalism. Bitterness of feeling was further increased by the attitude of the Hindus towards the extension of Reforms to the North-Western Frontier Provinces which have a large Muhammadan majority. Furthermore, an extremely strident and irresponsible Press largely helped to diffuse dissatisfaction and by constant incitements greatly to intestify it. The spirit of

lawlessness instilled into the masses by the non-co-operation movement now re-asserted itself and the year opened in an atmosphere dark with forebodings.

Swarajist walk-out.

2. Nor was Swarajist policy calculated to mitigate the bitterness of communal feeling or counteract a tendency to disregard the law. On the 15th March, the leader of the Swarajist party marched out his 35 followers from the Council, in pursuance of the mandate of the National Congress. This demonstration, however, failed of its full dramatic effect, as the leader had already announced that his party had the liberty to take part in the discussions and voting on the Bengal Tenancy Amendment Bill when it should come before the Council, and its force was further reduced by the manifesto of 11 Independents on the 13th March, expressing a similar decision with similar though more elastic reservations.

Budget discussions.

3. With the disappearance of the obstructionist members, the Budget went through with little difficulty. But what it lost in obstructiveness, it gained in the bitterness of recriminations inspired by communal feeling. The Calcutta University was denounced as "the monument of communalism" and strong criticisms were directed against the system of appointing Munsiffs whereby their selection is left to the Judges of the High Court, who, it was alleged, could go only on "mechanical appraisement" of educational qualifications without being open to "public opinion" and "other considerations". In moving the refusal of the demand for the Executive Council, the question of the early appointment of the Statutory Commission was raised. Except the Swarajists, it was argued, all other sections of the people had wholeheartedly worked the constitution. By postponing the appointment of the Commission on the ground of Swarajist non-co-operation, Government had attached an undue importance to the Swarajya party and had ignored the services of those who had fully co-operated. Was then the Swarajya party "the only representative party"? Should the remaining sections of the people be "penalised" and "denied their legitimate demands"? The debate

Statutory Commission.

revealed a general impression that the Royal Commission would herald the millenium, would not look beyond the legislative chambers and would brush aside the doings of the Swarajya party with indifference and contempt. It called for the obvious retort from the Hon'ble Member, "……if a Statutory Commission were appointed, it would surely ask a very pertinent question…… Whether the Swarajists are or are not the representatives of the people of the country, if they are not and have not been in a majority in this Council, how then could they succeed in obstructing the work of the Council?……I put it to the mover and those who speak in favour of this motion: Is your conscience clear? Who killed the dyarchy?……Are you prepared to stand up before the Statutory Commission and say 'our hands are clean: what we did was all right!'"

Calcutta riots. First phase.

4. With an unexpected suddenness communal rioting broke out in Calcutta on the 2nd of April. It started with a fracas between the members of an *Arya Samaj* procession and some Muhammadans concerning the playing of drums in front of a mosque, and with all the inflammable material that was at hand spread immediately like wild fire over a large area. Looting of shops was frequent, the motive being as often to cause mischief to members of the opposing community as simple plunder by bad characters. Incendiarism was rife, no less than 151 fires being caused within 4 days of the outbreak. But by far the most noticeable feature of these riots was the number of attacks on temples and mosques which resulted in greatly intensifying the bitterness of the struggle. Military assistance was requisitioned on the 3rd, and thereafter the disturbances consisted mainly in sporadic assaults on individuals in lanes and gulleys out of sight of the police. The struggle was at first between up-country Hindus and Muhammadans, but after an attack on a temple the Bengali Hindus were also roused, though they kept themselves mostly on the defensive. The period of tension was prolonged by the occurrence of the *Id-ul-fitr* on the 14th, after which there was a return to normal conditions. The casualties reported were 44 dead, of whom 24 were Hindus and 19 Muhammadans, and

584 injured, 327 being Hindus and 238 Muhammadans. The renewal of hostilities after the brief respite of a week on the 22nd April was hardly surprising. An insignificant drunken brawl sufficed to call forth the passions which had been aroused during the first riots and exacerbated by provocative writing in the Press. Isolated murders by hooligans of both communities showed an increase, though there was a decrease in the looting, incendiarism and attacks on religious institutions which characterised the previous riots. The improvement in this respect might have been to some extent due to the arrests made during the first riots, but it was certainly in large measure the effect of police patrolling, which rarely left any danger point unwatched sufficiently long for outrages requiring more than a few minutes to perpetrate. There were several occasions when hostile mobs did not disperse on the appearance of the police and showed determined resistance, and on twelve occasions it was found necessary to open fire. The disturbances continued till the 5th May but normal conditions were not restored till after the Sikh procession on the 9th, which had been postponed from the 13th April owing to the abnormal relations existing at that time. In order that disturbances over the procession might be avoided, a conference at Government House was called on the 7th May by His Excellency, Lord Lytton, but no agreement was reached. It was then decided to allow the procession on the 9th as previously arranged, but on the understanding that the regulations affecting music on this occasion were not regarded as a precedent for the award of any concession to either side. The peaceful conduct of the procession brought open hostilities to a close as the *Id-ul-fitr* had done in the previous riots. Of the persons killed during these riots 30 were Hindus, 31 Muhammadans and 5 of doubtful nationality, while the persons admitted to hospitals consisted of 172 Hindus, 213 Muhammadans and 6 of unknown nationality. The panic caused by the riots seriously dislocated business in the disturbed area. The closing of Marwari business houses resulted virtually in the suspension of business on the share market. Docks and railway stations remained idle and large quantities of merchandise were held up, and had not confidence been restored in time to enable the mills

Calcutta riots. Second phase.

Sikh procession.

Effect on business.

to complete their forward shipping contracts, the loss would have been much greater. Many of the local markets remained wholly or partially closed and normal supplies could only be assured by arranging for their protection by the enrolment of European special constables. The effect of the riots was visible almost all over the Province in an intensification of communal feelings. There were incidents here and there such as cases of the surreptitious removal of idols. But for a time there was a notable absence of violence and on many occasions the leading people of both communities strove hard to prevent collision and restore public confidence.

Effect on mufassal.

The Presidency Area (Emergency) Security Act.

5. On the 17th May a Bill was introduced in a special session of the Legislative Council " to make provision for the safeguarding of life and property in the Presidency Area in times of Emergency " by providing facilities for the speedy removal of such hooligans as those primarily responsible for the prolongation of the disturbances for whom the Goondas Act of 1923 was unsuitable. Before its introduction His Excellency Lord Lytton in a speech which will be found in Appendix I had explained to the members the circumstances which had necessitated the assumption by Government of such exceptional powers. The Bill was passed in spite of strenuous opposition from a section of the House.

The walk-in and walk-out policy.

6. The members of the Swarajya party who had walked out of the Council on the 15th of March " to seek her (*i.e.*, the country's) approval of the policy that (they) have so far followed . . . . to seek her mandate on (their) future policy " returned to oppose the taking into consideration of the Security Bill and, being defeated, walked out again. They came back again on the last two days of the July sessions in order to try to throw out the Howrah Bridge Bill, evidently to retain their influence in the Corporation by resisting a measure involving the raising of rates. In August they once more made their appearance to oppose the Calcutta Municipal Amendment Bill being taken into consideration. It is difficult to conceive a rational explanation of this

policy of the Swarajists. It seems to indicate that the Swarajists had realised the folly of the Cawnpore decision but were afraid to frankly admit it and disillusion their supporters, and that they had accordingly come to an *impasse*.

Kharagpur riots.

7. Meanwhile, communal tension continued. At Kharagpur disturbances broke out on the 17th May and continued till the 20th, resulting in 11 deaths and 31 injured. The riots started from a quarrel over the playing of music by a party of Telegus escorting a dead body past a mosque, but the real cause was undoubtedly the aggravated state of feeling due to the Calcutta riots and the inflammatory writings that had been poured out by the Press.

Music before mosques.

8. "Music before mosques" became during this period of communal tension the question round which antagonism centred, as it made a ready appeal to religious susceptibilities in the masses of both the communities. Until quite recently the subject had not attracted any considerable notice, and a hitherto prevailing spirit of accommodation had smoothed down difficulties whenever there had been any. In religious disputes the policy of Government is to remain completely aloof and neutral, so long as the public peace is not disturbed. But unless Government is prepared to decline their primary duty, they must come forward and intervene as soon as peace is threatened. In order to arrive if possible at a working compromise, His Excellency Lord Lytton called the leaders of both communities to a conference on the 17th May. No result, however, could be achieved, as each side put their claims at their highest with no regard for the difficulties of the other. On the 5th of June, Government published a Resolution (Appendix II) reviewing the question of music before mosques in Calcutta and promulgating their decision that, while no alteration would be made in the existing form of license, which prohibits music in the neighbourhood of religious institutions during public worship, the Commissioner of Police would in future define in the license the precise hours of congregational prayer. At other times music would not be prohibited except before the Nakhoda mosque, unless the police so directed with a view to secure public safety or convenience. The decision satisfied neither the Hindus nor the

Muhammadans, each community regarding it as an interference with their inherent rights. And though the decision of Government related only to Calcutta, Mr. A. K. Ghuznavi, the ex-Minister, started enquiries in all districts as to the prevalent practice regarding the question. These enquiries engendered much ill-feeling in both camps and acted as a contributory cause to the opening of hostilities in July over the *Raj-Rajeswari* procession.

Pabna riots.

9. Over the same question of music before mosques, riots broke out in Pabna on the 1st of July. There had been serious communal tension in this district during the previous year, towards the end of which there had been civil litigation over the election of the Chairman and the Members of the District Board. For alleged disobedience to an injunction of the Civil Court some of the leading Muhammadans were arrested and imprisoned, a circumstance which gave rise to considerable dissatisfaction and ill-feeling. In the latter part of April and May cases of surreptitious desecration of more or less abandoned idols were more frequent here than almost anywhere else in Eastern Bengal. The immediate cause of the serious outbreak of looting was a procession with music for the immersion of some mutilated images which had been left overnight by unknown persons on the public road. The authorities were kept in the dark as to the procession which was evidently intended as a demonstration with music outside a mosque. Rioting took place in the neighbourhood of the mosque, and there was great panic and wild rumours of looting. Perhaps owing to this panic, looting and rioting actually commenced and continued until the 8th July. The total number of casualties was, however, surprisingly small, only 19 persons, 12 of them suffering from gunshot wounds, being admitted to hospital, of whom one succumbed to his injuries.

Caloutta riots. Third phase.

10. The tension between the two communities which had been accentuated by the controversy over music before mosques and by wild reports of the riots in Pabna led again to open hostility in Calcutta on the 11th July, when a *Rathjatra* festival was attacked by some Muhammadans at Paikpara. On the 15th, the outbreak

became more general when the *Raj-Rajeswari* procession was allowed to proceed under the protection of law. It was originally intended to conduct this procession on the 1st June, but at the last moment the route had been changed by the Commissioner of Police because he found that the procession was to be converted into a Hindu demonstration and that large numbers of Hindus had been asked to join it exceeding the terms of the license. The disturbances continued till the 25th July. There were numerous conflicts between large bodies of opposing communities, as a number of religious processions of the *Rathjatra*, *Raj-Rajeswari* and *Muharram* were involved in them. In several cases, therefore, firing was necessary which was in each case strictly limited to the necessities of the situation. There were practically no instances of incendiarism with the exception of one diabolical attempt, which was thwarted by rain, to trap the inhabitants of a Hindu *bustee* within a ring of flames. A number of religious institutions were attacked, but nothing more than stone-throwing was attempted and the damage was not serious. There was great dislocation of business and the possibility of further disturbance during the *Pujas* hindered a return to normal conditions. The number of deaths reported was 28, 20 being Hindus and 8 Muhammadans, and of the injured 94 were Hindus and 132 Muhammadans.

Leaders and the riots.

11. What "Chauri Chaura" had revealed to the originator of the non-co-operation movement, the Calcutta riots should have brought home to the leaders of the rival communities—the extreme danger of rousing the masses by an appeal to their religious sentiments. Nothing was more conspicuous during the riots than the total inability of the popular leaders to restrain the members of their community. So strong was communal fanaticism that to show moderation was to run the risk of losing popular favour, and this no leader had either strength or courage to do. During the first riots a desire was expressed by some prominent men to be allowed to utilize the Congress and Khilafat volunteers to protect their mosques and temples and to assist in keeping order. But

while there was no interference with bands of youths protecting the sacred places from inside, the Commissioner of Police very properly insisted that any defence parties must consist of members equally from both communities and must agree to be enrolled as " special constables " under his control. On the excuse, however, of the unpopularity of the designation " special constables," this half-hearted offer of co-operation was retracted. On the 16th of April Messrs. Sen Gupta and Abul Kalam Azad issued a joint manifesto on the situation, but their object was apparently only to distribute blame in such a way as to defeat the argument that the riots indicated any difficulty in the path of Swaraj. " A close observation of the position " revealed to them " the extraordinary growth of the Hindu-Moslem *entente* for which Deshbandhu laboured so strenuously." While some thus engaged themselves in manœuvring for position with a view to the next constitutional advance, others pursued similar tactics with a view to the coming General Election. On the question of music before mosques a compromise, which would have greatly eased the tension, was avoided by the rival communities with what seemed to be a fixed determination not to compose their differences. In July Sir B. N. Mitra conferred with members of both communities, but in spite of all attempts failed to accomplish a reconciliation.

Injunction against Malaviya and Moonjee.

12. By the beginning of August immediately after the July disturbances had died down, whilst tension was still acute and excitement high, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and Dr. Balkrishna Seoram Moonjee announced their intention of visiting Calcutta. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya had been in Calcutta for some time during the previous riots. On the occasion of his last visit, just before leaving Calcutta, he had addressed a meeting of durwans, members of a class which had figured prominently in the disturbances, and his speech had been couched in terms likely in the circumstances to excite them. Dr. Moonjee had also spoken in Calcutta during the riots, and his public utterances had been likely to encourage public disturbance. An application was accordingly made to and granted by the Chief Presidency Magistrate, Calcutta, for an order under section 144, Criminal Procedure

Code. Both Pandit Malaviya and Dr. Moonjee disregarded this order, arriving, respectively, on the 7th and 9th August and leaving on the 8th and 9th. Neither availed himself of the ordinary remedy provided by the law by appearing before the Magistrate with a request for a modification of the order. Pandit Malaviya indeed declared his intention of defying the order, thereby increasing the risk to the public peace attendant on his coming to Calcutta. A complaint was accordingly made under section 188 of the Indian Penal Code and a case instituted against these two persons. On a consideration, however, of the speech made by Pandit Malaviya on the 7th of August which actually was not of a nature to cause communal excitement, as no rioting had subsequently occurred, the case was withdrawn against both Pandit Malaviya and Dr. Moonjee on the 19th of August.

Riots at Kidderpore and Dacca.

13. Communal hostility was, however, still far from subsiding. On the 5th September a licensed *Janmastami* procession was attacked in Kidderpore by Muhammadans while passing with music in front of a mosque at a time when there was no congregational prayer. There were 13 casualties reported, of whom 5 were police officers and the rest Hindus. Order was completely restored on the same day. At Dacca the *Janmastami* processions were attended with far more serious results. In view of long-standing local custom, no restrictions were imposed on the procession, but it was so timed as to avoid the important mosques at the regular hours of prayer. The Muhammadans, however, not only decided to take no part in it, contrary to their custom, but also made elaborate arrangements for its boycott by cartmen and hackney-carriage drivers. On the 8th and 9th September there were a few cases of isolated stabbing and rioting off the route of the procession, but there were apparently no signs of the storm that burst on the following morning. Hindu volunteers in retaliation for the boycott picketted the streets to prevent hackney-carriage drivers from obtaining fares, and the drivers who, either under compulsion from their communal organisations or under a sense of religious duty, had sacrificed the

two best days' earnings of the year, were exasperated into rioting which, under the tense communal feeling, immediately spread over the town. The situation was quickly brought under control, but isolated assaults continued till the 13th, 6 Hindus and 2 Muhammadans being killed and 72 persons injured.

A rapprochement.

14. A rapprochement between the leaders of the two communities was, however, effected in Calcutta just before the *Durga Puja* when for the first time a joint manifesto was published urging abstention from provocation. The *Puja* festival passed off without serious disturbances and a general improvement in the situation all over the Province was at last visible, except at Patuakhali (*vide* Government Communiqué, Appendix III), where Hindu volunteers under the leadership of Babu Satindra Nath Sen went on defying an order prohibiting music in front of a mosque and thereby submitting to daily arrests and prosecutions.

Terrorist conspiracy.

15. The serious nature of the terrorist conspiracy in India was again brought to public notice during the year by the open trial of several members of that party. Houses at Dakshineswar and in Sovabazar were found by the Courts to have been "in the occupation of members of one conspiracy the immediate object of which was to bring about a revolution by violent methods". The conspiracy included the importation of fire arms as an important item of its programme and one accused, Sudhangsu Chaudhuri, was found to have been "specially employed to arrange for the import of pistols and revolvers from Rangoon". The confession of the accused in the Domjur case also provided a vivid illustration of another aspect of the activity of the terrorists. The pamphlet *The Formation of Young India* found in Sovabazar contained instructions for the selection of recruits which appeared to have been faithfully followed in the conversion of the accused in the Domjur case. "He was led to understand", he said, "that there was an association using violent and dangerous means to achieve a political object which demanded self-immolation from its adherents. Pending proof of his trustworthiness he was not permitted to know very much about the

matter, but he was given a definite job in keeping various explosives—not keeping them as one friend for another but as an office-holder keeping them for use". The fact that the accused in these cases were mostly in their early twenties shows once more how "it is the impressionable youth of Bengal which is being seduced and sacrificed by this insane organisation". The widespread ramifications of the party were also clearly demonstrated by the simultaneous appearance in several provinces of *The Revolutionary*, a leaflet bearing the signature of "Vijay Kumar, President, Central Council, Revolutionary Party of India". This man was found by the Court to be no other than Sachindra Nath Sanyal, an old irreconcilable of the terrorist party. The daring and ruthless murder in the Alipore Jail in June of Rai B. N. Chatterjee Bahadur, a police officer who dealt with political crimes, and against whom there was no suggestion of any personal grudge, again brought into relief the character of the members of the terrorist party.

Party politics. Muhammadans.

16. Apart from communalism, the impending General Election also contributed in large measure to the fermentation in party politics. Particularly among the Muhammadans a feverish activity was visible. The main plank in the platform of the Muhammadan parties was the communal issue, but a spirit of personal rivalry caused serious dissensions and prevented them from uniting on definite party lines such as are necessary to carry on parliamentary government. The "Bengal Moslem party" of Sir Abd-ur-Rahim, formed in the beginning of the year, proposed to work the Reforms and aimed at obtaining for India a constitution framed on the basis of a Federation of autonomous provinces, with the Central Government controlling only the Central Services and being responsible for foreign and interprovincial relations. About the same time, the Bengal Moslem Council Party came into being with the object of "the attainment of Swaraj by the people of India by all peaceful and legitimate means and the protection and safeguarding of Moslem interests". By August three more groups were in existence under Messrs. A. K. Ghuznavi, H. S. Suhrawardy and Akram Khan. The group of Mr. Ghuznavi

held views similar to those of Sir Abd-ur-Rahim regarding the constitution and Muhammadan interests, but preferred to retain its separate entity. Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy held anti-Government views and was prepared to oppose the Hindus only when there was a conflict in the interests of Hindus and Muhammadans. The constitutional programme of Maulvi Akram Khan and his followers coincided with that of the Independents, except that the former were prepared to seek election on a Congress ticket if the Hindus gave immediate effect to the Hindu-Moslem pact. In the latter part of August the Moslem Council party coalesced with the group of Mr. H. S. Suhrawardy and formed the Independent Moslem party, with which Maulvi Akram Khan also joined forces. The Bengal Moslem party and the Independent Moslem party were thus the two organised parties which ultimately stood out during the Elections.

Responsivists and Nationalists.

17. The same centrifugal tendencies manifested themselves among the non-Swarajist Hindus. The necessity for the mobilisation of all non-Swarajist forces " to fight both bureaucracy and Swarajist unreason " was clearly recognised. " Let once the non-Swarajists combine ", wrote the organ of the Responsivists, " and they will find the country accepting them with alacrity. Let, too, the Muhammadans throw in their lot with the non-Swarajists and they will find themselves no longer a mere adjunct to a decadent party but a valuable ally to those who want to remove the present deadlock and get the constitution to work ". These pious wishes, unfortunately, were all destined to be wrecked on communalism and personal rivalries. The outbreak of the riots not only estranged the non-Swarajist Hindus from the Muhammadans but also furnished another impetus to the consolidation of their ranks. The manifesto of the Bengal Branch of the Indian Nationalist party issued by a number of prominent Liberals apprehended the possibility that " the exponents of communalism " with the help of official and nominated members would form a Ministry with a communal bias, and by pursuing their " particularist aims and method " would foster communal disorder and dissensions in the Province. They, therefore, urged the public

"to rise to the occasion and by boldly abjuring the policy of pacts and bluffs and destruction initiate a new chapter in national life". In a similar manifesto issued about the same time, the Responsivists deprecated all communalism and pacts which ignored the inherent rights of any community. While recognising that a "mass movement of resistance throughout the country", was a means of enforcing the will of the nation, they held that consistent obstruction could not be successful unless tried on a large scale, and that being impossible at present the Reforms should be given a chance in order to accelerate the grant of full responsible government. On essential matters, therefore, both the Responsivists and the Nationalists were agreed but upon minor points of difference they chose to hold tenaciously to their separate existence and thereby greatly to weaken their influence in the country.

Swarajya party.

18. Though personal rivalries were not so prominent, the dissensions among the Swarajists were no less real and serious. In an atmosphere charged with communal hostility, the Provincial Congress commenced its session at Krishnagar on the 22nd May. The Hindu-Moslem pact formed the main issue, but before that question was raised, a mild condemnation of terrorist methods by the President, Mr. B. N. Sasmal, was resented so vigorously by an influential portion of the meeting that he was compelled to leave the chair. The annulment of the pact was then discussed in spite of the opposition of the Swarajist leader, Mr. Sen Gupta, who with his followers left the meeting in a body, evidently in order to avoid being a party to the rescission of the pact which would inevitably result in the defection of the Muhammadan element from the Swarajya party. The majority of the delegates at the Conference including the members of the *Karmi Sangha* (Workers' Association), under the Presidentship of Mr. J. Chaudhuri, then annulled the pact, on the ground that it had proved a fruitful source of communal discord and had unduly encroached upon the rights of the Hindus. Not satisfied with this turn of events, Mr. Sen Gupta called a meeting of the members of the Provincial Congress Committee on the 13th June,

Congress Conference at Krishnanagar.

in which he succeeded in obtaining a declaration that the Conference at Krishnagar presided over by Mr. J. Chaudhuri, which rescinded the pact, was unconstitutional and that the question of the rescission or modification of the pact should be postponed in view of the present state of feeling in the country. The complete indifference of the Muhammadans to the fate of the pact showed clearly that they were not taken in by these tactics. The unrest in the Swarajist ranks was further revealed by the "academic" revolt of the "plutocrats" led by Mr. T. C. Goswami. The real dissension was, however, between the present leaders of the party and the younger section forming the Karmi Sangha. In a manifesto published in June, the Sangha complained that the Congress leaders had shown a preference for the limelight of the legislatures and had neglected the constructive work of village re-organisation. They emphasised that they were "against communal electorates, communal representation or recruitment of public service on a communal basis" and insisted "that there should be no interference with the civic rights of any community to conduct processions with music along public road". It was evident that this group was impatient of moderation, and wanted a fuller and more enterprising programme for the outlet of their energy. The value of their services during elections was great, and they had therefore to be placated at any cost. A compromise was at last reached in August on the basis of some concessions to the *Karmi Sangha*, which however resulted in the resignation of 12 members of the Executive Committee including Mr. B. N. Sasmal. "Every movement", it has been said, "carries within it the seeds of its own dissolution". Under the inspiring leadership of Mr. C. R. Das, an obstructionist policy had kindled a living faith among his followers. But that faith had been dimmed during three years in which the policy had proved to be barren of results. The discordant elements now all asserted themselves which the present leaders who lacked the qualities of Mr. C. R. Das found increasingly difficult to silence.

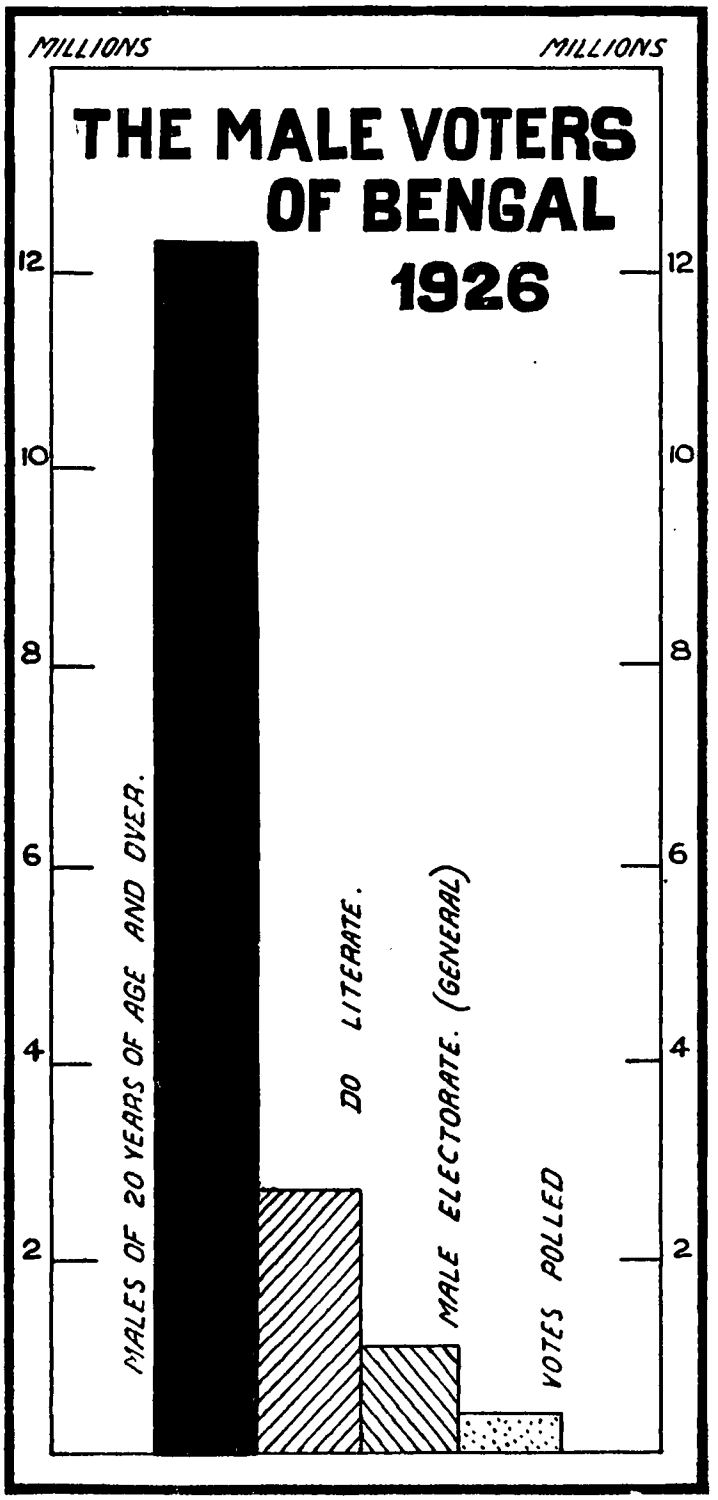
Dissensions.

General Election. Hindus.

19. Yet when the election came the Swarajists once more found themselves the best equipped and best organised party in

the field. Supported by a powerful Press and the young and active enthusiasts of the *Karmi Sangha*, they dominated the election everywhere. Compared with the previous election there was also noticeable a better organisation among the other Hindu parties. Free lances were few, and Responsivists and Nationalists did not generally contest the same constituency against each other in order to avoid a split in the non-Swarajist votes. The results of the election in this state of the parties were, therefore, nothing surprising. Of the 46 general seats 35 were captured by the Swarajists and only 8 fell to the Responsivists and the Nationalists. A notable defeat of the Swarajists was in Nadia Municipal constituency where against a prominent Responsivist all their efforts proved of no avail. An interesting spectacle was provided by Midnapore Municipal constituency where, owing to differences with his party, the stalwart Swarajist, Mr. B. N. Sasmal, stood as an Independent and through the efforts of the *Karmi Sangha* was ousted by a Swarajist candidate. The expulsion of some Swarajist members from the Council Chamber in February was recalled when, through strenuous Swarajist opposition, the offending ex-President had to yield his seat to the Maharaja of Natore. Outside Calcutta and the municipalities less interest seemed to be displayed by the electorate than in the previous election. In 1923, the percentage of votes polled was 46·23, whereas it was 40·7 in 1926. The new faith vaguely heralding a millenium which had stirred the minds of the people during the previous election was no longer at work and the fall in polling was probably to some extent its result. Activity among the Muhammadans was naturally much greater than at any time before. Among the definite parties the Bengal Moslems of Sir Abd-ur-Rahim easily held the field. The contests were, however, confused by a number of candidates of doubtful political views who stood on their own account owing allegiance to no party. The support lent by the Swarajya party to Muhammadan candidates who wore their label was negligible, owing probably to the knowledge of their certain defeat in the state of feeling then existing among the Muhammadans. Compared with the previous election, the number of Muhammadan votes polled increased, 39·7

Muhammadans.


MILLIONS
MILLIONS
THE MALE VOTERS OF BENGAL 1926
12
10
8
6
4
2
MALES OF 20 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER.
DO LITERATE.
MALE ELECTORATE. (GENERAL)
VOTES POLLED

per cent. against 37·51 per cent., to which the recent upheavals and the propaganda of organised political parties must have largely contributed. The results of the extension of the franchise to women were not reassuring. The number of votes polled for the Legislative Council was only 16·5 per cent. and for the Assembly 9·6, a fact which seems to indicate that political consciousness among women in this Province is still slight. Of the candidates returned for the Council, 38 were Swarajists including 2 Muhammadans, 18 Responsivists and Nationalists, 16 of the Bengal Moslem party, 8 of the Independent Moslem party, 3 Hindus called themselves of the Independent Congress party and 13 Muhammadans were of no definite party. How far the achievements of the Swarajya party are due to their better organisation and how far to their record in the Council, it is difficult to say. But there is no doubt that a distrust of Government is abroad and the Swarajya party largely fomented and exploited that distrust. How far the voters understood the larger issues it is again difficult to guess, but it is to the credit of the Swarajya party that they attempted more than any others to educate the electorate in party principles.

Women's franchise.

Results.

20. In welcoming the new Council in 1924, His Excellency Lord Lytton observed: " the obstacle to complete responsible Government to-day is not so much the defective form of the existing constitution as the defective formation and mobilisation of political opinion ". " Throughout the sessions of this Council ", His Excellency pointed out, " there will be only one main issue, *viz.*, whether you will side with the party of obstruction or whether you will side with the party of construction. If the object of both is the same, *viz.*, the attainment of full responsible Government, their methods of obtaining it are fundamentally different." His Excellency appealed to all those who disbelieved in the policy of obstruction to " sink their personal differences and subordinate their disagreements on minor matters to the service of this one principle which they have in common ". In spite of this clear presentation of the issue, however, the friends of the constitution

Parties and principles: A retrospect.

joined hands with its foes and " killed " dyarchy. The want of parliamentary education was undoubtedly responsible for this blind action of the non-Swarajists to whom the dominating personality of Mr. C. R. Das proved a more compelling force than any party principle. The kaleidoscopic formations of small groups clustering round some outstanding individuals and refusing to fuse into more effective wholes was another aspect of the influence of personality as opposed to principle. Communalism was still another foreign matter introduced into parliamentarism which, however deplorable, is likely to take time to disappear. But this period of trial has not altogether been in vain. " Neither do I admit ", said His Excellency Lord Lytton in his St. Andrews' Dinner speech at the end of the year, " that the period has been altogether unprofitable, because education may proceed in negative as well as positive lines, and a nation or an individual may learn as much by failure and mistakes as by success ". Already the non-Swarajists have solidly voted for Ministers' salaries and Dyarchy has been revived!

II.—Police.

Police and the riots.

21. Critics are proverbially wise after the event. During and after the riots, therefore, criticism of police measures was poured forth in great abundance. It was suggested in many quarters that if firing had been resorted to more freely it would have effectively checked the riots from spreading. But the main feature of the disturbances was the number of isolated attacks in alleys and by-lanes, out of sight of the Police. To deal with such isolated attacks by firing was out of the question, and would at best have resulted only in the shooting of innocent people with very little chance of hitting the culprits. Nor was it practicable to arrest all the rioters. As the assailants immediately made themselves scarce in the lanes with which the disturbed area abounds and found shelter among their co-religionists, it was impossible for the police to find them out or establish their identity, even though they arrived within a short time of the occurrence. Flying patrols were sent to make immediate searches

for bad characters and lethal weapons in the locality where the assaults had taken place, and in the circumstances no better measure could have been devised. A more general complaint was that the fixed picquets did not rush to assistance when alarms were raised. This ignored the nature of their duties and the fact that false alarms were so frequent that any such hasty response would have been attended with great mischief and confusion. Some critics had martial law on their lips, but apparently their idea of what it meant was very vague and was born of despair and irritation. That rioting lasted so long in "the second city of the Empire," was argued to be a sufficient measure of the inefficiency of the police and the executive. This contention, however, ignored the truth that in such times of general upheaval, especially in a city like Calcutta, when the unruly elements are supported and encouraged by a wide-spread feeling of communal antagonism, no executive measures can afford complete protection to the people. Another imputation which was levelled against the police, was partiality to one community or the other. In the aggravated state of communal bitterness such an imputation was not unnatural. It cannot of course be claimed that individual constables may not have allowed their sympathy with their co-religionists to interfere with their duty, but there was no justification for the general and unsupported charges which were levelled against the force. All definite charges against the force were investigated and only one was brought home resulting in the dismissal of four constables. All charges against police officers failed in the courts, and two of them were found to be deliberately false.

Hindus and Muhammadans in Police force.

22. The proportion of Muhammadans in the Calcutta Police was made a grievance during and after the riots. The number of Hindu and Muhammadan officers in the force was 499 and 187, respectively, and of the lower ranks 77·3 per cent. were Hindus and 22·7 per cent. Muhammadans—a proportion which is not far below the proportion of Muhammadans in the population of Calcutta. The difficulty in the way of increasing the Muhammadan element, is the lack of suitable material who

would accept service on the pay which attracts the Hindus. In 1925 recruits to the Bengal Police numbered 2,154. Of these only 640 were local men, of whom 44 per cent. were Muhammadans, a fair number of the local candidates being rejected on physical grounds.

Increase of Police Force.

23. The riots brought into prominence the importance of the European element in the Calcutta police force. They were the only section of the force who inspired confidence and there were insistent demands for posting sergeants in quarters where communal feeling ran high. Their number was, however, too small and it was impossible to augment it by normal methods of recruitment. The Army authorities, however, happily agreed to lend the services of 100 men from British regiments who were temporarily enrolled as sergeants and did extremely valuable service. The success of the experiment led in August to a permanent accession to the police of 50 European sergeants and 6 European inspectors. The inadequacy of the police force in the neighbouring districts of 24-Parganas, Howrah and Hooghly was clearly exposed during the riots. Proposals for the reorganisation of the police force of the 24-Parganas had been sanctioned by the Secretary of State in 1919, but effect had not been given to them owing to lack of funds. The presence of a large number of industrial labourers, many of whom are criminals and are easily excited to acts of violence, and their close proximity to Calcutta rendered the strengthening of the police imperative. For the same reasons the emergency force of armed police of Hooghly and Howrah had to be strengthened. Proposals for this measure had for some time been awaiting sanction. Additional staff was also sanctioned for patrol duty in Burra Bazar, the hooligan centre, and for traffic duties in the southern suburbs of the city. In times of necessity this addition to the force would also act as reserve.

Extension of the Goonda Act.

24. The outbreak of hooliganism in Calcutta necessitated the application of the Goonda Act to an extended area including Naihati, Jagatdal and Bijpur. *Goondas* had found it easy

to move from Calcutta and shelter themselves among the mill-hands and railway workers in these places, from which they were able to operate without being liable to the same degree of police control.

Crimes.

25. The general trend during the year was towards an increase in crimes of violence and a continued decrease in crimes against property. For the increase in murder, dacoity and robbery no particular cause can be assigned. The increase in dacoity, it may be noticed, was confined to the districts of Hooghly and the 24-Parganas. The increase in the number of riot cases was partly due to communal trouble all over the Province, but the dissociation of the police from control over village chaukidars, and the consequent failure to obtain timely information of land disputes, must also, to some extent, have been responsible. There was, however, a gratifying decrease in cases of burglary and theft. The figures for burglary were the lowest since 1912 and those for theft since 1914. The improvement was no doubt due, to a certain extent, to recent orders and instructions issued by the Inspector-General for the prevention and detection of such crimes. There was no overt act of terrorism during the year owing to the successful application of the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act.

Defence Parties.

26. The growth of defence parties in villages is an encouraging feature of the times. It denotes a realisation by the public that, without their co-operation and assistance, the problem of satisfactorily policing the Province, for which the regular force is manifestly inadequate, must remain unsolved. If developed along proper lines it offers a means by which the estrangement which has so long existed between the public and the police may be overcome to the advantage of both. There were 1,450 such defence parties at the end of 1925, and they effected 179 arrests during the year, most of them independently of the police.

Rural Police.

27. Co-operation from the rural police is unfortunately still far from satisfactory. The thana police receive considerably

less information of criminals and their movements now-a-days than before, and as a result surveillance over bad characters has appreciably slackened. Without a mutual understanding between the Union Boards and the police, improvement in the position can hardly be possible.

III.—The Press.

General characteristics.

28. "A fair and candid criticism" is held to be the standard in England of the freedom of discussion in the press. "A critic must confine himself to criticism and not make it the veil for personal censure nor allow himself to run into reckless and unfair attacks merely from the love of exercising his power of denunciation." Judged by this criterion the tone of the Indian press can hardly be called satisfactory. "A fair and candid criticism" is altogether a rarity, and a love of denunciation only too common. An intense obsession with politics again prevents the press from treating public questions with any regard to their relative importance. It misses thereby its opportunities for shaping and educating public opinion on matters which make up much the greater part of the life of the people. Its outlook is further circumscribed by an unreasoned and settled hostility against Government. There is no measure of Government however beneficient behind which it does not scent sinister motives and deep-laid conspiracies, and no ills in the country for which Government may not be held responsible.

Communalism and Party Organisation in the press.

29. But the greatest motive force in the press during the year was the intensity of communal feeling. The press threw itself more and more into party organisation on communal lines to further which a number of papers was founded and first published during the year. Under the editorship of Mr. B. Chakravarty, the *Bengalee* became the champion of "responsive co-operation". Advocated as "the best way to amend dyarchy and forge a new constitution" and as a "serious effort to immediately remove the argument of the Swarajist obstruction from the way

of.....the next constitutional advance to Swaraj or self-governing status", it received an added meaning from the communal struggle. "The country should make its choice", said the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, "between two evils—a communal ministry and a responsivist ministry not in the sense of the ministry for any particular party but a ministry that will prevent the communalist from using any part of the machinery of the Government to advance communal ends". The necessity felt by the Muhammadans to strengthen their voice against the Hindu Press led to the starting of nine Muhammadan papers during the year. Of these four came out within a month of the first riots in Calcutta, three of which voiced the opinions of people in the mufassal. Though communalism was naturally the principal influence in the Muhammadan press, a distinct cleavage was noticeable in its attitude towards Government, some papers supporting Sir Abd-ur-Rahim in his pro-Government attitude and some advocating the cause of the Independents in their pronounced hostility against him.

Communal riots.

30. Communal strife again brought into relief some of the worst features of Indian journalism. With the outbreak of the Calcutta riots, the press divided itself (with few exceptions) into opposing camps on communal lines. By giving exaggerated and one-sided accounts of incidents, publishing in sensational prints highly inflammatory leaflets issued by the other community, imputing bias and dark motives to executive authorities and denouncing recklessly all their actions in the suppression of the riots, the papers encouraged a spirit of lawlessness among their readers and incited them to retaliatory action. Wholly lacking judicious censorship and restraint in the interests of the common good, even unmeaningly they often added to the bitterness of feeling. In order to discuss the situation and impress on them their serious responsibilities the Hon'ble Member in charge called the Editors to a conference on the 9th April, but with little effect. Provocative writing continued even after the first riots and by keeping the atmosphere charged with communal feeling made it possible for an insignificant drunken brawl to develop into a second

outbreak of serious rioting. Nor was the mischief confined to Calcutta. The poison spread to the mufassal and created communal bitterness such as had never been known before. To check the pernicious influence of the press criminal prosecutions were undertaken and the Editors responsible for some of the most objectionable publications were convicted. The wholesome effect of these prosecutions, however, did not last for long. Events in Pabna again led to journalistic excesses which necessitated a further series of prosecutions. Thus, while the press reflected the common mind only too faithfully it completely failed in the higher duty of leading the public to a calm and detached view of the general good.

Alleged British Policy of "Divide and Rule".

31. A very common imputation in the Press during this time was that the basis of the British Government in India was a policy of " divide and rule " and that communal dissensions were only its inevitable result. This argument drew support from an article in the *Manchester Guardian* (dated 1st May 1926) and from a letter of Lord Olivier to the Times (dated 11th July 1926). The system of communal electorates was cited as a measure deliberately devised by Government to accentuate and perpetuate the Hindu-Moslem dissensions and thereby to check the rising tide of nationalism. This contention surprisingly was not confined to the Hindus alone. The *Dainik Soltan* delved deep and found the motive in making " the numerically inferior Moslem community an enemy of the other communities " in order to check their power and prevent them from regaining their lost ascendency. The announcement by Government of the decision to reserve the right to appoint Muhammadans to as many as 45 per cent. of the posts in certain services was hailed by the Hindu Press as another indication of that policy, an interpretation which was, however, strongly resented by the Muhammadans.

Bengal Hindu-Moslem Pact.

32. The growing dissatisfaction with the Swarajya Party owing to their lack of interest in village reorganisation and their failure in their immediate object of paralysing the constitution received a stimulus from their support of the Hindu-Moslem Pact,

which, under the pressure of communal feeling, had become anathema to the majority of Hindus. The question rose into prominence after the session of the Bengal Provincial Congress at Krishnagar. The opinion of the party opposed to the Pact was thus summed up by the *Ananda Bazar Patrika*: "The Bengal Pact was created by Swarajists with a view to bribe a certain Muhammadan politician and retain him in their party. The Hindu-Moslem problem cannot be solved by such a trick." The majority of the delegates at the Krishnagar Conference was of opinion that the present communal tension was the outcome of the great blunder committed by making communal rights and privileges the foundation of Hindu-Moslem unity, but the Swarajist members were anxious to hush up the matter". The *Mussalman* was of opinion that Muhammadans should not "allow themselves to be hoodwinked by specious plausibilities". The *Forward* of course, vindicated the action of the Swarajist leader but hinted that the Pact was nothing unalterable.

The Royal Indian Navy.

33. The narrow political outlook of the Press provided curious comments on some of the most important problems of the day. The Royal Indian Navy was understood by the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* to be meant "to relieve the British vessels operating in the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf" and "to afford some relief to the British tax-payer at the expense of the Indian". The *Nayak* suspected that the Navy was going to be created for "tightening the grip of the British on India". The appointment of the Royal Agricultural Commission was alleged to be due to more various motives. "The demand for Swaraj" wrote the *Nayak*, "has become so acute and unavoidable that it is now necessary to divert the minds of the people from politics to something else". "To promote intensive agricultural production in order to increase the purchasing power of the Indian people which would be utilised to benefit Britain's industrial and mechanical ventures and thus solve her unemployment problem" was found by another paper to be the *raison d'être* of the Commission. The constitution of the Commission was represented as an attempt to outbid the political classes in winning over the sympathies of

The Agricultural Commission.

cultivators whose political strength had been demonstrated in the non-co-operation days; whilst it of course provided another illustration of the policy of divide and rule for it was represented as being obviously intended to raise a feud between zamindars and tenants, between the agriculturists and the middle classes. Not quite so unreasonably, the Press criticised the terms of reference as too narrow to serve any useful purpose, and advocated the resuscitation of dying cottage industries and the allotment of more money by Government as the only practical means for improving the condition of agriculture and the agriculturists of the country. Criticism of the Currency proposals was equally feeble. The contention of Sir Purushottamdas Thakurdas regarding the exchange ratio in general received unqualified support. The fear expressed by the Commission that the reactions of a gold currency scheme on silver and gold in other countries would prove disadvantageous was regarded as an indication of bad faith. How the surplus rupees of which there are over 100 crores now in reserve were going to be disposed of did not seem to occur to anybody.

The Currency Commission.

Bengal Tenancy Amendment Bill.

34. The impact of "higher politics" was felt, even in a purely agrarian question like the Bengal Tenancy Amendment Bill, which, however, was discussed in certain sections of the Press with more reason than many other questions of the day. It appeared to some to be another bid to alienate the sympathies of cultivators from all political agitation and another attempt to create dissensions in the country. A novel implication was made by the *Dainik Basumati* when it observed, "There are more peasants among Muhammadans than among Hindus and it is quite possible that Muhammadan peasants will try to take advantage of this opportunity to place their zamindars in a tight corner".

Proposals regarding Primary Education.

35. Education claimed very little space in the columns of the newspapers and the only question which was discussed with any zeal was the proposed Bill for Primary Education. The newspapers represent the opinion of the "politically educated" classes

rather than of those who are really to benefit from the introduction of the measure, and their full fury was accordingly brought to bear upon the constitution of the proposed Board of Primary Education. "Why all this paraphernalia of supervision and control in so harmless, elementary and modest a proposal for primary education?" asked the *Forward*. It is satisfactory to note, however, that the necessity of taxation was generally recognised.

Jails.

36. Considerable attention was devoted to the Jails during the year. The condemnation of the prison system chiefly centred round the alleged ill-treatment of political prisoners and received an impetus from what have been called the "Mulvany disclosures". An increasing healthy interest in convict prisoners was also noticeable. The reformative aspect of punishment was emphasised and various suggestions for improvement in that direction were also forthcoming. When, however, His Excellency Lord Lytton dwelt on the same problem in a public speech, comment upon his statement took the form of mere denunciation.

Indian States.

37. The question of Indian States was brought into prominence by the proposed Commission of Inquiry on the Maharaja of Indore and his subsequent abdication, and the claim of His Highness the Nizam to the rendition of Berar and the reply thereto of His Excellency the Viceroy. General support for the subjects of the States against their non-representative Governments, a hesitation to criticize openly some of the Princes probably for fear of alienating their sympathies from Indian aspirations, a desire that they might be drawn more and more into the machinery of the Indian Government, a dissatisfaction with the attitude of Government towards the status of the States, conceding at the same time, though half-heartedly, the justness of Government action in the cases discussed. such were the characteristics of the Press in its view of the Indian States. Much academic sympathy was shown by the Hindu Press towards His Highness the Nizam on the matter of Berar but the later allegations of maladministration against him gave a communal colour to discussions and completely wore off this thin veneer of sympathy.

South African Legislation.

38. The total inability of the Press to divest itself of its pet suspicions was again demonstrated in its criticism of Government in the matter of the South African legislation. "By empty reasoning the Indian Government with cowardly impotence is trying to minimise the gravity of the injustice done by the South African Government", was the opinion of one extreme paper. "The state of abject subjection in which Government keeps Indians at home", was advanced by another to be "a very powerful weapon in the hands of the South African Government when they have to brush aside the Indian demand for citizen rights".

Bolshevism.

39. Bolshevik theories and activities found little support among the Indian papers which are almost entirely representative of the intelligentsia and the bourgeoisie. The Communist Conference at Cawnpore at the beginning of the year caused something of a flutter. The *Nayak* assured its readers that from conversation with the President of the Conference, it had understood that "his party were communists only in name and there were no sufficient grounds for fearing them". Others recognised the utility of a communist party composed of raiyats and labourers but only as forming a section of the Congress and not as a rival to or independent of it. Among the champions of Bolshevik theories a pronounced hostility could be seen against the Congress as standing exclusively for the class interests of the bourgeoisie. Even "Mahatma Gandhi", said the *Langal*, "had turned away from the masses in the direction of the capitalists to get their help."

Attitude towards revolutionaries.

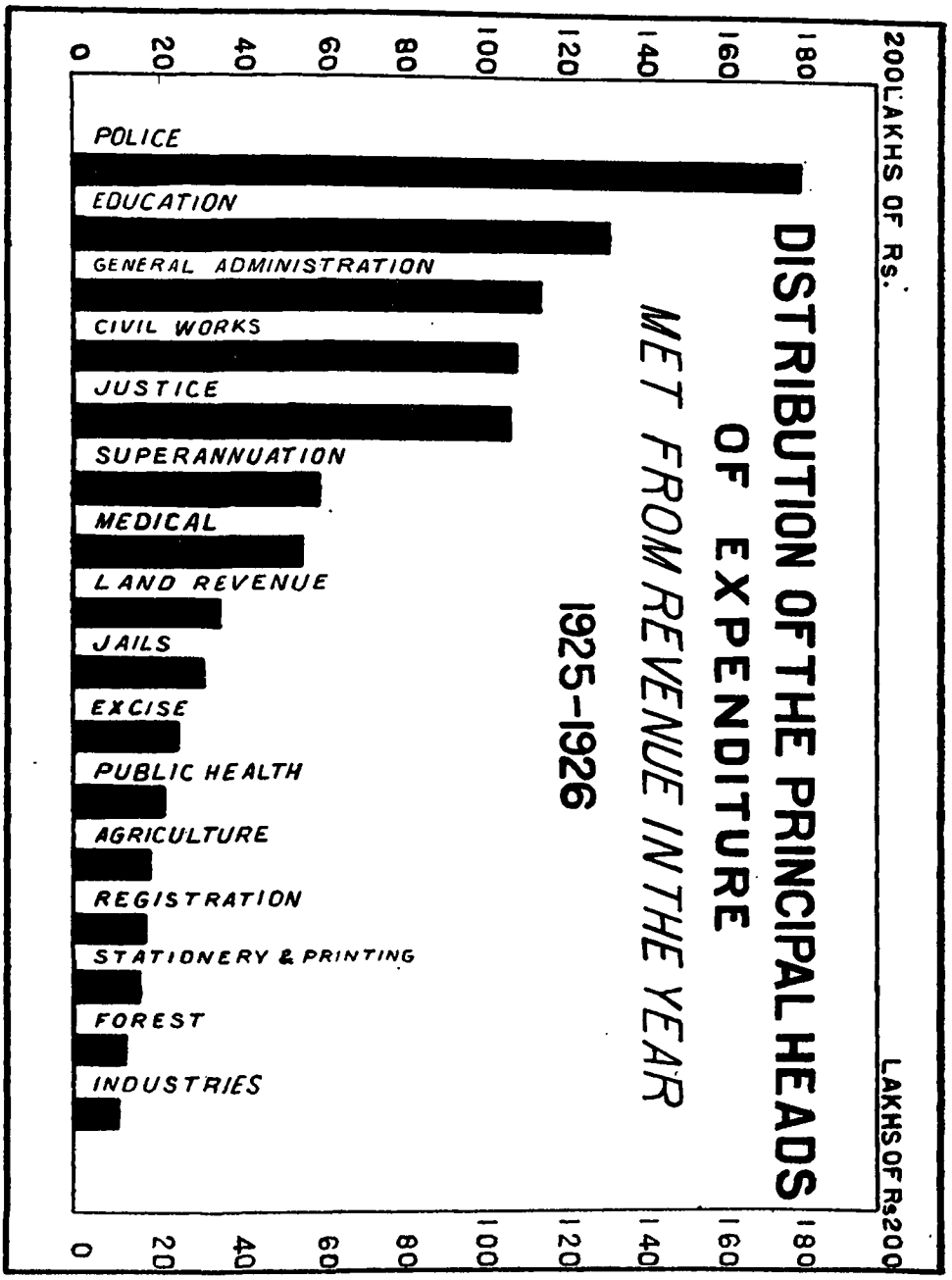
40. The open sympathy of the Press towards the revolutionary activities continued unabated during the year. By constantly idealising the terrorists as martyrs to the cause of their country, it not only encouraged the revolutionaries to persist in their attitude but also incited impressionable youths to follow their example. The Press developed considerable skill in introducing into articles with an evidently seditious intention passages which placed them beyond the reach of the law. The finds at Dakshineswar, Sovabazar and Domjur were obviously disconcerting but no line of

attack was left untried. Attempts were made to belittle the finds, suspicion was expressed that they had been fabricated by the police in order to bias the new Viceroy, and even moral justification for such activities was not wanting. The newspapers naturally refused to be impressed by the serious disclosures during the trial of the cases. The offence in the Dakshineswar case was declared to be "almost trivial and purely technical" by the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*. "The Commissioners of the Tribunal were obliged to fulfil the object with which it was created" was the opinion of *Viswamitra*. The "*agent provocateur*" argument was repeated with as much vehemence as before. When two of the accused were executed for the dastardly murder of a police officer in the Alipore Jail, the *Nayak* was carried away by its emotions: "On the gallows departed two patriotic souls, leaving a void in the breast of conquered Bengal"!

IV.—Finance.

The budget.

41. In presenting the estimates for 1925-26, the Finance Member again dwelt on the inadequacy of the revenue allocated to this Province by the Meston Committee and the extreme iniquity of the annual contribution, which had to be provided for in the budget pending the decision of the Central Government. He pointed out how it had been impossible ever since the fateful award to embark on any schemes, involving a permanent charge on the revenue. "We have not", he said, "abated our claim for an entire revision of the Meston Settlement.....we cannot go on marking time and allowing the proceeds of our new taxation to be swallowed up merely in maintaining the normal wants of the administration without making any progress or development". The estimates contained proposals for the expenditure of Rs. 58½ lakhs on new schemes, all except Rs. 9 lakhs being of non-recurring nature. This expenditure was to be met not from the current revenue, which was too insufficient, but from the accumulated balances which had resulted from excess budgetting, economy, and the temporary remission of the Provincial contribution. The Hon'ble Member refuted the allegation that Government were not fully alive to


DISTRIBUTION OF THE PRINCIPAL HEADS OF EXPENDITURE
MET FROM REVENUE IN THE YEAR
1925-1926
LAKHS OF RS.
LAKHS OF RS.
0
20
40
60
80
100
120
140
160
180
200
POLICE
EDUCATION
GENERAL ADMINISTRATION
CIVIL WORKS
JUSTICE
SUPERANNUATION
MEDICAL
LAND REVENUE
JAILS
EXCISE
PUBLIC HEALTH
AGRICULTURE
REGISTRATION
STATIONERY & PRINTING
FOREST
INDUSTRIES

the needs of the transferred Departments. He pointed out that while the transferred Departments received Rs. 29½ lakhs out of the new non-recurring outlay, the reserved Departments received only 20½ lakhs (excluding Rs. 8½ lakhs for Calcutta Police Housing Scheme, to be eventually recouped from loan funds), and that the new recurring expenditure of Rs. 9½ lakhs was, with two trifling exceptions, wholly allotted for the former.

Actuals of revenue, expenditure and surplus

42. The estimates as finally passed omitting the Provincial contribution which had been remitted by the Central Government, anticipated an opening balance of Rs. 1,61,86,000 and receipts and expenditure of Rs. 10,55,11,000 and Rs. 10,77,38,000, respectively. The year, however, actually opened with a balance of Rs. 1,93,91,000 and the actual receipts and expenditure amounted to Rs. 11,04,64,000 and Rs. 10,60,29,000, respectively, leaving a surplus of Rs. 44,35,000 on the working of the year. The opening balance, which in 1922 had fallen as low as Rs. 90·92 lakhs from Rs. 2½ crores in the previous year, thus accumulated to Rs. 2,38,26,000 in 1926.

Actual revenue.

43. Coming to the actual revenue realised during the year, the heads which exceeded anticipations by a large margin were "Stamps", "Forests" and "Registration", and the heads which fell behind in their returns were "Excise" and "Scheduled Taxes". The increase under "Stamps" was about Rs. 16½ lakhs more than anticipated, the effect apparently of the additional taxation imposed a couple of years ago. The increases under "Registration" and "Forests" were to the extent of Rs. 13½ and Rs. 5 lakhs, respectively. The raising of the rates of registration fees in some cases during the year, and the increased number of registrations were responsible for improvement in the revenue from this source by about 52 per cent. The decreased yield of about Rs. 3 lakhs under "Excise", on the other hand, was due to a reduced consumption of country spirit in the Calcutta excise area, to a fall in the receipts from foreign liquor made in India which suffered from the competition of cheap imported articles, and to the high price of rice and the depression in the coal trade which

affected the *pachwai* revenue adversely. The fall in "Land Revenue" is really nominal, as it was due to a change in the dates of certain *kists* of some estates in the Burdwan district from March to June, 1926. There were also some minor variations under other heads of receipts and, in result, the revenue exceeded anticipations by Rs. 49,53,000.

Actual expenditure.

44. On the expenditure side, the budget as passed by the Council in March, 1925, contemplated, exclusive of expenditure not charged to revenue, the disbursement of Rs. 10,67,80,000. To this was added in the supplementary estimates a sum of Rs. 19,85,000, thus making a total sum of Rs. 10,87,65,000 available for expenditure during the year. When the revised estimate of the year was framed, it was anticipated that the expenditure would be a little more than Rs. 34¾ lakhs short of the sanctioned grant. The actual expenditure, however, was over Rs. 56½ lakhs less than the sanctioned grants. The heads which showed the largest savings were "Civil Works" (Rs. 12½ lakhs), Irrigation (Rs. 6¼ lakhs), Expenditure in England (Rs. 6 lakhs), Police (Rs. 5½ lakhs), Jails (Rs. 3¾ lakhs), General Administration (Rs. 3½ lakhs), Public Health and Medical (Rs. 3 lakhs under each head), Land Revenue (Rs. 2½ lakhs) and Miscellaneous (Rs. 3¼ lakhs). The savings under "Civil Works" were more apparent than real, as part of the expenditure under this head, covering the Police Housing Scheme, had been transferred to the head "60—Civil Works not charged to Revenue". The savings under other heads were partly due to excess budgetting owing to difficulties in forecasting with any accuracy the increase in expenditure in the pay of officers and establishment, and partly to the inability to give full effect to some of the new schemes for which money had been voted in the supplementary budget. The sanctioned grant under the debt heads was Rs. 34,64,000 against which the actual expenditure amounted to Rs. 29,22,000. Loans and advances by the Local Government were considerably less than the estimates, owing to good agricultural conditions and the non-utilization of the full amount provided for loans to various co-operative organisations. The expenditure, on the other hand, under "Superannuation allowances and pensions" outstripped the original estimates

by a considerable margin and a supplementary grant of Rs. 6,31,000 had to be taken in March, 1926. The variation was again due to the difficulty in estimating accurately the amount to be paid to other Governments as the commuted value of pensions for retired officers of this Government resident within their jurisdiction, and in estimating the full effect of the general increase in salaries sanctioned during the last few years. On the whole, the total savings as compared with voted grants amounted to Rs. 62 lakhs.

Control of expenditure.

45. A system of controlling expenditure against budget appropriations by departmental controlling officers was introduced during the year. But owing to the many technical difficulties which had to be overcome, the system worked but haltingly and its effectiveness was not felt to the full extent.

V.—The Sea-borne Trade.

46. The most striking features of the sea-borne trade of the year were a general decline in import prices, a great depression in the cotton goods market and violent fluctuations in the prices of raw jute and jute manufactures. The decrease in the value of imports from Rs. 90·12 crores to Rs. 83·82 crores was mainly due to the depression in the cotton trade and the increase in the value of exports from Rs. 152·41 crores to Rs. 154·48 crores to the better prices obtained for jute and jute products in the latter part of the year.

Coasting trade.

47. In coasting trade, excluding treasure, imports fell from Rs. 22·37 crores to Rs. 20·89 crores and exports from Rs. 18·34 crores to Rs. 17·68 crores. The fall in the total value of imports was due almost entirely to the poor receipts of cotton goods from Bombay. Jute manufactures, as usual, were the most prominent item in the export trade, advancing from Rs. 4·28 lakhs to Rs. 5·10 lakhs, but there were heavy decreases in shipments of rice, tea and tobacco unmanufactured.

Gold and silver.

48. Imports from foreign countries rose from Rs. 2·45 crores to Rs. 3·74 crores, and exports from Rs. 1·49 lakhs to Rs. 6·92

lakhs. On Government account there were no imports and only Rs. 6·50 lakhs' worth of silver cents were exported to Ceylon. Imports of gold decreased from Rs. 64·51 lakhs to Rs. 22·40 lakhs, owing to much smaller purchases from Australia, but imports of silver increased from Rs. 1·81 crores to Rs. 3·51 crores, the United Kingdom, Australia and the United States of America all sending larger supplies. Exports of gold fell from Rs. 1·49 lakhs to Rs. 30,000 and shipments of silver totalled Rs. 6·62 lakhs, as against nil last year.

Import trade.

49. The hopes of a revival in the cotton trade entertained at the beginning of the year were doomed to disappointment. Great depression continued in the market and imports dropped by 15 per cent. in quantity and 22 per cent. in value. The high Lancashire prices, which were kept up by the high price of raw cotton, were mainly responsible for this depression: they led to reduced consumption and consequently to decreased imports. In the coarser style of grey goods, Japan competed successfully with Lancashire and India. Owing to a poor Indian crop and a general decline in prices in other producing countries, the imports of sugar were the heaviest on record since 1921-22. Imports of iron and steel advanced both in quantity and value, the most noticeable features under this head being the increase in imports of galvanised sheets due to the prosperity of the tea industry and the decrease of bars, rods and tin-plates, probably as the result of the protective tariff. After the large arrivals of the previous year, there was a decline in the import of salt, despite the much lower level of prices. The introduction of the new duties gave an impetus to the trade in tobacco, which is evidenced by the increase in the value of imported cigarettes from Rs. 38·85 lakhs to Rs. 47·30 lakhs. This market was practically monopolised by the United Kingdom. The general decline in the prices of motor vehicles helped the steady expansion of the trade, and imports during the year increased by over Rs. 31½ lakhs. Another item which showed a noticeable increase was jute manufactures which rose in value from Rs. 10 lakhs to Rs. 28 lakhs, due to the re-importation of bags and cloth, while the paucity of local supply

induced purchases of wheat from Australia and raised the total value of grain, pulse and flour from Rs. 6,294 to Rs. 29·96 lakhs. The Indian match industry continued to expand as purchases of the foreign article decreased still further from Rs. 32 lakhs to Rs. 26 lakhs, the increase of imports from Sweden from Rs. 9 lakhs to Rs. 16 lakhs, being more than counterbalanced by the decrease of imports from Japan from Rs. 24 lakhs to Rs. 10 lakhs. Purchases of undipped splint and veneers for match-making decreased, being steadily displaced by logs of wood from Japan and Sweden. Imports of other articles were well maintained, the only fluctuations worth notice being the increases under machinery, hardware, instruments, apparatus and appliances, spices, apparel, cycles, umbrellas and fittings, stationery, paper-making materials, soap and manures and the decreases in railway plant and rolling stock, building and engineering materials, tea chests, books and printed matter, dyeing and tanning substances, and haberdashery and millinery. A feature of the year was the arrival of a cargo of oil from Batoum. There was a heavy falling off in the total value of imports from the United Kingdom, which was confined chiefly to cotton manufactures, business in the majority of other articles being well maintained. Imports from Germany and Belgium were less than in the previous year, but both France and Italy improved their trade. Although Java sent more sugar, the fall in prices reduced the total value, while Japan improved her position by larger sales of cotton goods, glassware, hardware, logs for match-making and toys, which more than balanced her losses under cotton twist and yarn, and matches.

Export trade.

50. The total value of jute and jute products exceeded all previous records, while the value expanded from Rs. 80·50 crores to Rs. 96·30 crores, the total tonnage shipped, however, actually fell off from 1,500,536 tons to 1,450,427 tons. The increase in value was really more nominal than real, as the figures represent the values at the time of export and not necessarily the price actually paid for them. In fact, a large part of the exports was shipped under contracts, which had been made at prices much

lower than those ruling at the time of despatch. The violent fluctuations in prices resulted in nullifying much of the potential profits of the trade. Owing to careful plucking for the requirements of a discriminating market, to the limitation of the crop to avoid an excess and, during the latter half of the season, to the abnormal weather conditions and a shortage of labour, the output of tea during the year was reduced from 300 million lbs. to 240 million lbs. and the value from Rs. 30·09 crores to Rs. 23·29 crores. Other items showing an improved trade were hides and skins raw, opium, mica, oil-cakes, spices, cordage and rope and instruments. Exports of raw cotton from Calcutta declined from Rs. 129 crores to Rs. 85 lakhs, though there was an improvement in shipments from the whole of India. An important event was the suspension of the cotton excise duty from the 1st December, 1925, followed by its final repeal in March. Items showing noticeable decreases were grain, pulse and flour, woollen manufactures, saltpetre and tobacco. The total value of articles of foreign merchandise re-exported dropped, owing chiefly to smaller shipments of raw wool to the United Kingdom, from Rs. 23 lakhs to Rs. 16 lakhs. Trade with the United Kingdom on the export side declined principally on account of smaller shipments of tea at lower prices. The value of exports to Germany also fell off, but trade with France, Italy, Russia and the United States improved. Japan's total purchases showed a sharp contraction in pig iron, raw cotton, lac and rape seed. Java, on the other hand, was compelled on account of her large sugar crop to increase her orders for gunny-bags and the very high prices ruling were responsible for a great expansion in the total value of her trade.

Exchange.

51. Exchange was much steadier than it has been for some years. It opened at 1*s.* 5,13/16*d.* for telegraphic transfers, rose to 1*s.* 6,3/32*d.* and remained at about that figure until the last week of the year when it fell to 1*s.* 5,7/8*d.* The higher and steadier exchange brought down the prices of the imports and contributed to the general increase in their quantity, except of cotton goods for reasons already stated.

VI.—Local Self-Government.

Municipalities.

52. There was no marked improvement in the general level of municipal administration during the period under review. The number of municipalities remained the same as in the previous year, *viz.*, 115. General elections were held in 25 municipalities, and, owing partly to Swarajist attempts to capture seats, most of them were well contested. In no less than 9 municipalities civil suits were pending in connection with elections. Considering the number of such suits and the time taken to dispose of them, provisions were made for Special Tribunals in the Bengal Municipal Bill of 1925, but the motion for introducing the Bill was rejected by the Council. The re-introduction of the Bill is now under contemplation, as the last Council did not seem to have realised its importance fully. The percentage of rate-payers to the total population was 15·8, practically the same as in the previous year, varying from 40·1 in Sherpur to 3·2 in Tittagarh. The percentage of collections fell from 95·3 per cent. to 94·3 per cent. In Bally it was as low as 69·1 per cent. due, so it is reported, to party faction and defective supervision on the part of the municipal executive. The amount of remissions showed a decline and represented 3·6 per cent. of the current demand. In most cases they were the result of careless and illegal assessment, inefficient collection and reluctance to enforce the summary procedure as provided in the Act. For the same reasons the balances outstanding at the close of the year rose from Rs. 13 lakhs to Rs. 14¾ lakhs. Some of the Commissioners themselves were the worst defaulters. Whether a Municipal Commissioner who does not pay his taxes within the time prescribed should not make himself liable to be disqualified will be considered when the Municipal Bill is next introduced in the Council. Apart from excessive party faction, bad collection, unwillingness to adopt stringent measures for fear of incurring unpopularity and readiness for the same reason to remit taxes, another characteristic of municipal administration has been an almost studied indifference to the audit of their accounts. With a view to check this tendency, the Minister in charge has proposed

to insist on prompt and proper disposal of audit notes while considering the granting loans and other financial help from Provincial revenues. The frequent occurrence of embezzlements of municipal money has been one of the effects of this indifference to the remarks of auditors and to the account rules. In several municipalities during the year offenders were criminally prosecuted and dismissed from service, though as a rule Municipal Commissioners rest satisfied with the recovery of the sums misappropriated and the dismissal of the delinquents. Brighter features were not, however, altogether absent from municipal administration during the year. Not only were many of the mill towns well administered, but there was also much zeal and public spirit in some of the smaller municipalities of a semi-rural type like Kushtia, Birnagar and Nalchiti. Distinct progress was made in the improvement of urban sanitation and water-supply, and the way in which certain municipalities tackled the problem of primary education is highly commendable. The average incidence of taxation was extremely low, *viz.*, Rs. 3-1-5 per head of population. It is true that the general average is kept down by many places that are not urban aggregates at all, but mere groups of villages indistinguishable from similar groups in the cess-paying area. It may be further admitted that municipal incomes are rising and that there is on the whole increased readiness to find the money required for local improvements. There is still, however, a general disinclination to face the fact that improved services and better conditions must be paid for and that money wisely spent on the betterment of sanitary conditions, on education, on medical relief and on communications will give a return not only in greater happiness and comfort, but also in increased prosperity.

District Boards.

53. Except in Midnapore where there was reckless spending all round, the administration of District Boards by non-official Chairmen continued on the whole to be satisfactory. As in the previous year most of the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen did their best to discharge the responsibilities imposed on them even at the sacrifice of their private interests. Special attention was given to medical relief and public health. The expenditure under these heads aggregated Rs. 20 lakhs, against Rs. 15 lakhs in the previous year, the increase

being most marked in the 24-Parganas. The attempts which were made to combat kala-azar are specially noteworthy. In respect of the permanent dispensaries, maintained or aided by District Boards, a consistent policy, however, is still lacking. In pursuance of a resolution passed by the Legislative Council, special grants are given by Government to District Boards to help them in establishing dispensaries at thana headquarters. It often happens that a private donor offers a bait to District Boards in the shape of a contribution in land or money for the establishment of a dispensary in a neighbourhood, which is already well provided. The desire of such a person to benefit his native place is quite natural, but it often results in diverting the funds of District Boards from other areas where money is more badly needed or in reducing the money available for the unkeep of the existing dispensaries. Such donations, therefore, should not ordinarily be accepted unless a fund can be created sufficient for maintenance of the new institution. The reduction in the expenditure on water-supply and on primary education during the year is significant as indicating that District Boards can only make serious endeavours to tackle a particular problem by reducing expenditure on other heads. As regards the general question of water-supply, it must be admitted that it is primarily a matter for villagers themselves, that the greater part of the cost must be found by Union Boards or other village organisations, and that the resources of District Boards are too small to do anything more than supplement and encourage local efforts by modest grants-in-aid. The outlay on original works under "Communications" showed a decline during the year of Rs. 96,652, while the cost of repairs rose by Rs. 66,625—a fact which shows that more attention was paid to repairs than to new construction, a wise policy, no doubt, in view of the hopeless inadequacy of the income of the District Boards. The Motor Vehicles Bill, which was introduced into the Council last year and which sought to authorise local bodies to levy a reasonable fee on motor traffic, was dropped on the report of a Select Committee. It has since been decided to substitute for it a Bill authorising Government to levy a tax on motor vehicles, the income therefrom being expended in grants to local bodies to assist them in maintaining or improving

Dispensaries.

Primary education.

Water-supply.

Roads.

communications. The yield of the tax is likely to be small, and unless some other measures for increasing the funds of District Boards can be found no general improvement of mufassal roads can be expected.

Local Boards.

54. The number of Local Boards remained the same as in the previous year, *viz.*, 82. The Local Boards as they are at present act only as a "fifth wheel" in the coach of Local Self-Government. Particularly in areas covered by Union Boards, they serve no useful purpose, and it seems desirable to replace them by bodies dealing with smaller tracts of country than a subdivision, *i.e.*, a circle or thana, if such intermediate bodies are considered necessary at all. Their future is now under consideration of Government.

Union Boards.

55. The progress in the creation of new Union Boards, especially in the districts of Mymensingh, Nadia and Chittagong, was a noteworthy feature of the year. The total number of Boards was 2,217, against 1,500 in the previous year. In some places, however, opposition was encountered as Union Boards are still often looked upon merely as an engine of increased taxation. The amount realised during the year in union rate and rent of chaukidari chakran lands amounted to Rs. 30 lakhs, of which Rs. 25 lakhs were spent on establishment and collection, leaving a balance of Rs. 5 lakhs only for communications, medical aid, education, water-supply and sanitation. The attitude of District and Local Boards was quite sympathetic, but it is desirable that more duties and works should be transferred to Union Boards, under section 33 of the Local Self-Government Act, and that a more generous and judicious grant-in-aid policy should be followed, giving help according to deserts as well as needs.

Problems.

56. Without an augmentation of their income, however, the local bodies can hardly expect to cope adequately with the problems that confront them. "With the general awakening of people", says Rai Biswambhar Rai Bahadur, Chairman of the Nadia District Board, "……the functions of the District Board have been greatly expanded without, however, a corresponding adequate expansion of resources. Necessarily, the activities of this Board have been mainly

directed to those departments which are very necessary for the very existence of the people.....Again, the manifold activities of health and sanitation in combating against kala-azar and malaria and controlling the widespread epidemics of cholera and small-pox show how the energies and resources of the District Board are almost exhausted on such works of defence, and leave very little to be done for constructive work." Some progress can be expected as a result of the activities of Union Boards whose powers to realise by taxation what they require, unlike those possessed by the Local Government and by District Boards, are practically unrestricted. Operating in a comparatively small area, the members of Union Boards, however, are peculiarly sensitive to public opinion which in practice places a limit on the amount that they can realise from their neighbours for public purposes. Moreover, large schemes of improvement cannot be financed from the Union rate alone. For any real advance, therefore, steps must be taken to augment the resources at the disposal of District Boards, either by raising the statutory limit at present imposed on the rate of road and public works cess or by substituting some form of local taxation which will apply to agriculturists as well as to non-agriculturists and will take the property and circumstances of individuals rather than the annual value of lands as the basis of assessment. When the present incidence of cess is on an average less than 3 annas a year per head of population, it can hardly be contended that there is ample room for such an increase in local taxation.

VII.—Agriculture.

Possibilities.

57. "We have.....an immediate possibility", says the Director with an arresting optimism, "of adding Rs. 10 crores per annum to the net revenue of this Province. The realization of this enormous increase requires no outlay of capital in the shape of manures, irrigation works, or other expenditure of any kind..... What is wanted is that people of influence all over the country should decide to help the Department in its good work and undertake.....to dispose of a quantity of improved seed in a given

tract every year." In the present state of the agricultural population, their poverty and the small size of their farms, the easiest and the most fruitful lines of advance are certainly the use of improved seeds and a more suitable rotation of crops. The Department of Agriculture has, therefore, concentrated its activities on research in seeds and the propagation of improved strains.

Jute.

58. The varieties of D. 154 and D. 27 of departmental jute have been established to be the heaviest yielding types yet met with. About 3,000 maunds of seeds were produced and sold during the year, and yet the demand outstripped the supply. (See Illustration No. 15.) In collaboration with the Indian Jute Mills Association, investigation is being made to find out the relative effect of seed and environment on the quality of jute fibre. The results obtained so far seem to indicate that while environment is a powerful factor, the quality of seed has at least a temporary influence. The departmental races of *Indrasail*, *Dudsar* and *Kataktara* have maintained their outstanding superiority over local varieties under conditions for which they have been selected, and their use is fast spreading. Special attention is now being given to the selection of races suitable for the drier tracts of West Bengal and of improved strains of *balan* paddy of Bakarganj. Departmental Yellow *Tanna* Cane has been spreading rapidly. The new cane, C. O. 213, is showing great promise. The work on tobacco has now reached a definite stage and a programme of expansion has been laid down for the Province. Experiments on flue-curing of tobacco have yielded results of commercial value by producing leaf of the desired colour and quality. Investigations have shown that it is possible to introduce cotton as a revenue crop in the highlands of West Bengal and also as a *rabi* crop in East Bengal. The improvement of "Comillas" in Chittagong Hill Tracts is also under investigation. Manurial experiments carried on at the Dacca Farm have shown that on red soils the application of lime, bone and potash at an average annual expenditure of Rs. 18 per acre is profitable in that it results not only in a material increase in the yield of jute, namely, a four-fold return, but also of other crops throughout the rotation.

Rice

Sugarcane.

Tobacco.

Cotton.

Manures

Efforts are being made to propagate these results among the jute cultivators on the red soil tracts by organising co-operative societies.

Demonstration farms.

59. The principal method of popularising the improved seeds raised by the Department has been through district farms, where the strains evolved at the Central Farm at Dacca are tested, adapted to changed environments and then demonstrated to the public. In order to show the full financial results of the departmental seeds to the cultivators and that agriculture conducted on the lines recommended by the department is a paying proposition, the demonstration section has been completely separated from the experimental section and is being run on strictly business lines. A new development has been the farm at Kishoreganj. The cultivation of the farm is being carried on by the actual cultivators of the locality, supplied with departmental seeds of paddy, jute and sugarcane, on condition that they return an equal quantity after harvest in addition to the share of the produce as due under the *barga* system. By demonstrating the value of departmental seeds in this convincing way, the farm has given a great impetus to their popularisation. A similar farm is being established at Jamalpur. The growth of private farms conducted on up-to-date lines, of which there are now 100, all using improved seeds raised by the Department, has been an important feature in the development of the farming industry. The financial crisis through which the Province has passed, has so far restricted the activities of the Department. With easier circumstances, however, steps are now being taken to make up the leeway, gradually to establish farms in every district and to let them grow up to their full stature in usefulness.

Kishoreganj farm.

Private farms.

Agricultural associations.

60. Next to district farms, the organisation of agricultural associations can be made a most effective means of propaganda among the cultivators. For demonstrating the results of departmental research in the various branches of agriculture, for requisitioning and distributing departmental seeds, for piercing the conservatism of the cultivators with direct persuasion, for bringing the needs of the people to the notice of the Department and for

helping the agricultural development in other ways, the possibilities of these associations are indeed great. It is time that the enlightened public realised the importance of agricultural associations and threw their full weight in utilising them to the utmost.

Co-operation.

61. The achievements of the co-operative movement in assisting the agricultural growth of the country are reviewed under a separate heading. It need only be observed here that in the financing of agricultural operations, in the introduction of improved methods, seeds and manures, in the marketing of agricultural produce and in the most economic supply of the necessaries of life, the co-operative societies have already demonstrated their usefulness in an effective manner. They have also greatly stimulated the spirit of self-help among the agriculturists, without which all parental action on the part of the State can only have a partial success.

Agricultural Education.

62. Closely bound up with the improvement of agriculture is the question of agricultural education. A general enlightenment of the agricultural classes through primary education is, of course, a first necessity for all progress. The position in this Province was explained by the Hon'ble Finance Member when, in course of his budget speech he observed: "It has become obvious that we are spending disproportionately on higher education and neglecting the masses. We are.....this year commencing a policy of increasing our funds for primary education. The amount until our finances have still further recovered cannot be large, but we can at least make a beginning and lay down the principle that primary education is entitled to a fair share of the funds available for educational expansion". A purely literary education has often been found to be harmful to the sons of agriculturists, by making them contemptuous of their fathers' lot without at the same time providing them with any other outlet for their talents. Steps are now being taken to introduce agricultural classes into the curricula of Middle and High Schools on the Punjab lines, as described in the previous report. Such classes are expected to instil a sense of the dignity of labour into the scholar and a bias for his ancestral occupation.

An Institute is going to be established at Dacca for supplying the need of competent scientific farmers and managers of estates, and generally for providing higher education in agriculture.

Pests.

63. The study of pests is a matter of utmost importance for agriculture and therefore forms an important function of the Department. The resigned apathy of the cultivator, however, is a heavy drag on progress in this direction. Several useful results were obtained during the year from investigations carried out by the Department. The betel-vine disease was found to be caused by a fungus, the cure of which was obtained in a copper spray. Successful attempts were also made to prevent the rotting of potatoes kept for seed.

Sericulture.

64. The main problem of sericulture at present is the combating of disease. In the production of disease-free cocoons, the Government nurseries which are now 11 in number continued to prove their high usefulness. The quantity supplied by these nurseries and selected rearers receiving financial and supervisional help from Government amounted to one-third of the total for the whole of the Province.

Water-hyacinth.

65. The rank growth of water-hyacinth has assumed alarming proportions within a short time. Not only does it affect navigation, but it also constitutes a danger to the cultivation of *bhil* paddy. A series of experiments have led Government to the conclusion that its final eradication can only be effected by a campaign of manhandling on a large scale, without which chemical spraying by itself will be altogether futile. Collection of data in this light is now progressing, while investigations are also in progress, meanwhile, to find out ways for the economic utilisation of the weeds.

Cattle-breeding.

66. The development of agriculture in India is greatly dependent on the improvement of the breed of cattle. Experiments for the production of bullocks of good stature for draught purposes and cows of good milking capacity have already achieved satisfactory results. (See Illustration, Frontispiece.) What is necessary now is to popularise the pedigree bulls which have been

evolved at the farms of Rangpur and Dacca. The matter has now been placed in the hands of a whole-time expert to make progress as rapid as possible. The solution of the problem, however, is far from complete without the provision for an adequate fodder-supply. In Bengal, at the present time, there is an alarming shortage of pasture grounds, due to their encroachment by cultivation. Experiments are being carried on in several farms with fodder crops, with a view to discovering their relative superiority as catch crops and as cold weather crops.

Irrigation.

67. Bengal fortunately is much less in need of irrigation than several other provinces in India. For the most part, she lies below the high flood level of her network of rivers which irrigate the land when in flood. The problem, therefore, is mainly one of defence and consists in the regulation of water on the land and control of the river courses. In the Burdwan Division, however, particularly in the districts of Bankura and Birbhum, the problem is of a different nature. Though rainfall in these parts is ordinarily sufficient, the distribution is so variable that a regular supply of water can only be assured by irrigation. There are two systems of canals maintained by Government in this Province. The Midnapore Canal irrigated about 75½ thousand acres of land during the year, and the Eden Canal about 24 thousand acres. The indigenous methods of irrigation are by lifting water from tanks and by diverting it from small streams by earthen dams. Owing to a variety of reasons, particularly to the indifference of absentee landlords, the leasing out of the beds and sides of half-filled tanks for cultivation and the increasing number of co-sharers making joint action difficult, most of the tanks have now become half-choked and altogether inadequate for the purpose for which they exist. A strong movement is now afoot to wrest these tanks from encroachments and to have them re-excavated through the agency of co-operative societies. The same agency is also being utilised for replacing the earthen dams by masonry weirs wherever possible. At the end of the year, there were in the districts of Birbhum and Bankura 168 and 170 co-operative societies, irrigating, respectively, over 20 thousand and 50½ thousand bighas of land. Apart from these, the Amjore and

Salbund weirs in the district of Bankura were completed during the year. Surveys of several of the schemes in Midnapore, Birbhum and Bankura were also finished, some of which will be taken up under the Agricultural and Sanitary Improvements Act, VI of 1920, and some under the Irrigation Act, III of 1876. Preliminary works were commenced for the Damodar Canal which has been designed to irrigate about 196,000 acres of land in Burdwan and Hooghly districts. In the Sundarban tracts which lie below the high water level of the intersecting rivers, prevention of the ingress of salt water is of primary importance for the preservation of the crops. A noteworthy development during the year was the formation of a co-operative society for the purpose of putting up an embankment in the Khulna district for the protection of an area of 1,200 bighas.

Agrarian problems.

68. Since 1921, the attention of Government has been closely held by some far-reaching problems of agrarian relations. Constant subdivision and subinfeudation of rights has rendered it necessary to revise the fundamental provision of the Bengal Tenancy Act by which the right of occupancy is limited to one class alone in the chain of those interested in the land. The limitation has commonly resulted in reducing the actual cultivator, for whom the right was originally intended, to the position of a mere tenant-at-will under the legal non-cultivating raiyat. Without any legal protection in his occupancy, the transferability of such right, again, increases his insecurity and tends to reduce him to "little more than a serf on the land he once called his own". These are some of the difficulties in the present agrarian conditions which have come to the fore. A comprehensive Bill for the amendment of the Act was brought up before the Council during the year. The Select Committee to which the Bill was referred, however, proposed such radical changes that Government found it impossible to proceed with it as altered. With a view to the introduction of the Bill in the next Council, an official Committee has since been appointed to revise it in the light of the improvements suggested by the Committee, without sacrificing any of the principles on which it was originally based.

General agricultural conditions.

69. Weather conditions were on the whole favourable for agriculture during the year. The western parts of the Province suffered from drought to some extent and the eastern parts from excess of rainfall. The outturn of *bhadoi* and *rabi* crops was 73 per cent. and 76 per cent., respectively, of the normal and of the winter rice 92 per cent. The yield of jute was not satisfactory, but the prevailing high prices provided sufficient compensation. Almost all the agricultural products commanded high prices and benefited the cultivators.

Landlords and tenants.

70. The commencement or expectation of settlement operations has been a disturbing factor in some districts, tempting some zemindars to attempt to enhance rents. The groundless fear that *bargadars* would be given occupancy right did not subside altogether and led in some cases to these men being deprived of their lands. Again, in the Dacca district some Muhammadan cultivators refused to cultivate on the *barga* system the lands of Shaha money-lenders. These were, however, only temporary frictions and were exceptions to the friendly relations generally subsisting between these classes.

Illegal cess.

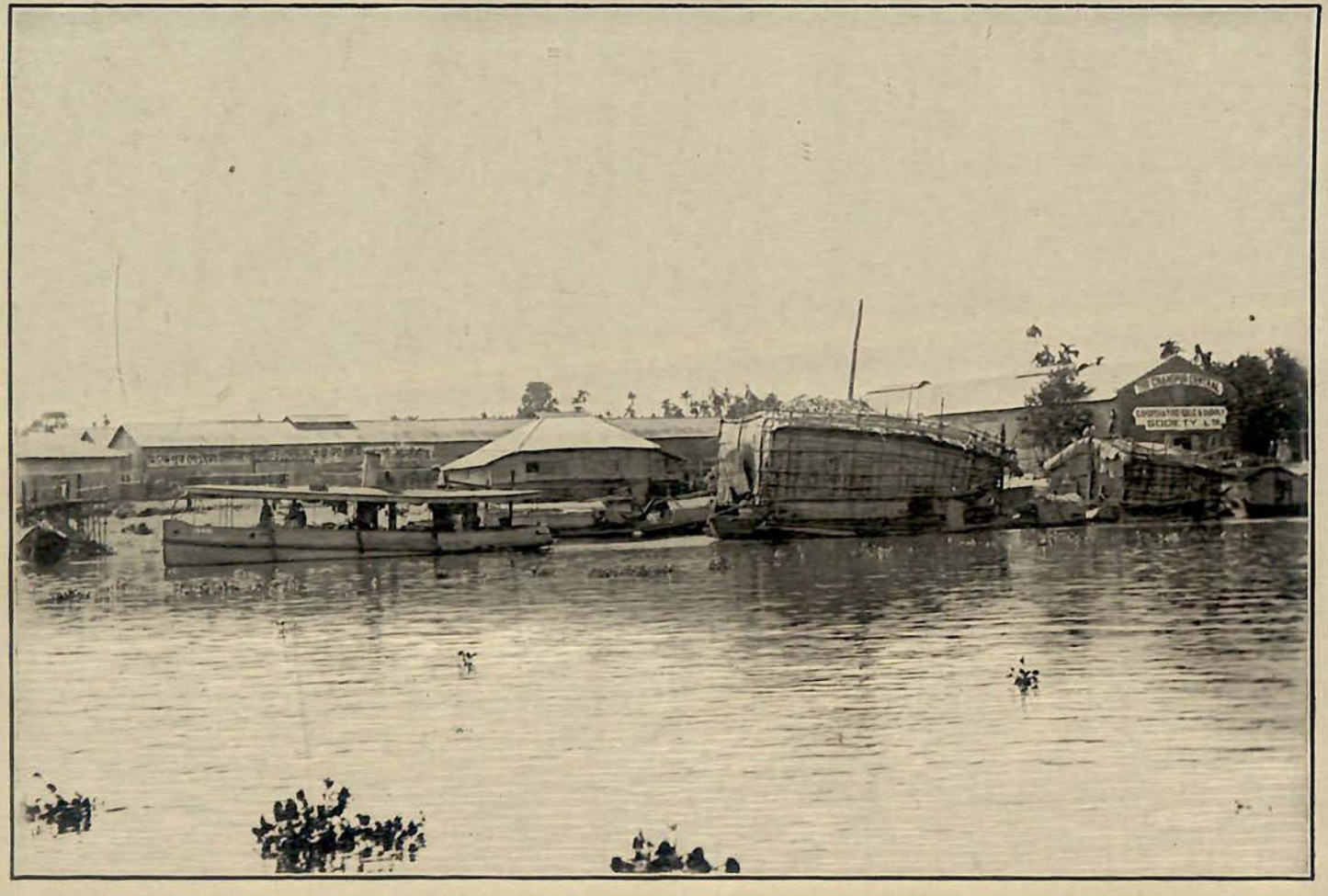
71. The practice of levying *abwabs* or illegal cesses is unfortunately still prevalent throughout the Province. The tenants usually pay such *abwabs*, knowing them to be so, in order to secure the good-will of the zemindar's local agents and, in some cases, to avoid the displeasure of the zemindar himself. The publication of the record-of-rights in some districts has, to a certain extent, discouraged this practice; and it is reported that the creation of raiyats' *samitis* in Rangpur has also effected some improvement in this direction.

VIII.—The Co-operative Movement.

Progress.

72. Aided by prosperous agricultural conditions, the year was one of special activity for the co-operative movement in this Province. Though the demand for societies was not as strong as in the previous year, being 15·6 per cent. against 18·3 per cent., there

To face page 1.



Society's launch arriving with loaded boats in tow.

was a marked increase in the relative accession to membership, 17·4 per cent. against 13·4 per cent., and also in the working capital. Compared to the position in 1921, the number of societies, their membership and the actual cash employed in the movement has almost doubled. In fact, the progress made since the inception of the movement 21 years ago has been great, specially in view of the appalling illiteracy of the masses whom the movement is designed to benefit and the difficulty of funds with which it had to contend at the start.

Credit societies.

73. Criticisms have frequently been made that the co-operative movement in this country has been concentrated on the credit side to the neglect of its other important aspects. "These criticisms", says the Registrar, "overlook the principle that each country must study its own requirements and must follow the lines of advance most suited to it. In this country with a vast population, predominantly agricultural, mostly illiterate, poverty stricken, dependent on traditionally high rates of interest for obtaining financial accommodation, credit is naturally the foundation on which other forms of co-operation must be based." Already the movement has effected a marked reduction in the prevailing high rates of interest. It has also taught people to invest in societies their surplus money, which used formerly to lie idle.

Sale and supply societies.

74. Appreciable progress was made during the year in the development of sale and supply societies on a large scale, in giving effect, in other words, to the idea of re-organising the economic structure in respect of sale of agricultural produce and supply of necessaries of life on a co-operative basis. Experiments have shown that sale societies to be successful must be on a large scale, so as to be able to handle a large quantity and to guarantee quality. The organisation of the Chandpur Sale and Supply Society (see photographs) gave a great impetus to the sale movement, and towards the close of the year similar societies at Sarisabari, Bhanguria, Serajganj, Naogaon, Taki

(Basirhat) and Alamdanga were organised for the sale of jute, which within this short period, have been able to establish their marks with the mills. Several paddy sale societies are also now in operation. With a view to assisting them in the most advantageous disposal of their stock, financial assistance was rendered by Government to establish a Central Godown in Calcutta. Government have also agreed to provide adequate supervising staff for a small number of paddy and jute sale societies in their initial stages and to grant financial assistance to them in the shape of loans for the provision of storage accommodation.

75. On the purely credit side the working of the year fully demonstrated that the development of co-operative banking and the linking up of the financing of agriculture with that of trade and commerce will be of incalculable benefit to the country, as it will undoubtedly save much of the waste attendant upon the use of cash. Considerable advance was made during the year in the introduction of the distinction between short-term and long-term loans, which corresponds to a real distinction in the needs of members. By maintaining an effective watch over the proper use of loans and their repayments, and by helping to keep the major portion of the assets of the societies in a fluid state, this distinction would undoubtedly assist the movement to come into closer touch with the money market.

Long and short-term loans.

Land mortgage Banks.

76. For the redemption of old debts, necessity is now being felt for separate organisations in the form of Land Mortgage Banks. By raising the capital required by issuing debentures, if necessary, such banks would advance loans to the agriculturists on the mortgage of their lands with which they may free themselves from ancestral debts and incur capital expenditure for the improvement and extension of their holdings. Only one such bank has been established so far, that in the subdivision of Naogaon in Rajshahi district which started work during the year. A beginning was made in the scheme under which well-managed village societies are permitted to open

with their Central Banks drawing accounts against which members may operate by means of cheques. At present, members are often unable to obtain loans at the time when they require them most and, therefore, take loans, even when they do not require them, in anticipation of future difficulties. A wider adoption of drawing accounts would help to remove the inelastic and piecemeal character of the present system. **Drawing accounts in the Banks.**

77. In spite of the set-back caused by the failure of some stream schemes in Bankura district referred to in the last report, the co-operative irrigation movement made further progress during the year, specially in the districts of Bankura and Birbhum. The number of irrigation societies rose from 268 to 350, and there was a considerable expansion in the area irrigated. A noteworthy development was the formation of a society for putting up an embankment for protecting from the ingress of salt water an area of 1,200 bighas in Bhil Durbadanga in the Khulna district. **Irrigation societies.** **Embankment society.**

78. The Calcutta Milk Union recorded marked development during the year. The Corporation of Calcutta granted to the Union a non-recurring subsidy of Rs. 5,000 and a loan of Rs. 50,000 free of interest, repayable in 6 years, on condition that the Union increased its yield to 500 maunds a day within 3 years. With this assistance the Union was able to erect a dairy fitted up with up-to-date plants for the purpose of pasteurising and treating milk. The membership of the Union increased from 63 to 71 societies, and the existing capital from Rs. 75,000 to Rs. 1,17,961. There was a further extension in the area of its operations. **Milk Union.**

79. The great difficulty in the way of the development of industrial societies is the control now wielded by *mahajans* over the supply of raw materials and the disposal of the finished products. Every attempt is being made to overcome these difficulties, and co-operative organisations are more and more taking over these functions of the *mahajans*. Foremost among **Industrial societies.**

these societies are the weavers' associations. Of these, the Bagerhat Co-operative Weaving Union has started the first co-operative cotton mill in India. Considerable advance was also made in the organisation of the silk industry on a co-operative basis. The Dopukuria Silk-Reeling Society in Murshidabad took up the construction of the first co-operative factory of its kind for reeling silk in filature. A Silk Union was established at Malda. Societies for the different processes in the manufacture of silk from the rearing of cocoons to the reeling of silk will be affiliated to the Union. The Union will regulate the relations between the different classes of societies and will co-ordinate their activities, thereby placing the co-operative silk organisation on a self-contained basis.

Anti-malarial societies.

80. Owing partly to the distribution of grants by Government, there was a remarkable expansion of the activities of co-operative anti-malarial societies for the improvement of rural sanitation. The number of these societies rose from 98 with a total membership of 2,251 and working capital of Rs. 8,753 to 269 with 6,488 members and a working capital of Rs. 19,064. They are doing useful work by combating preventable diseases such as malaria, kala-azar and cholera, and they have also applied themselves to the provision of pure water-supply by sinking tube-wells in places of scarcity.

Saroj Nalini Dutt Association.

81. Hitherto, the movement in this Province consisted of men's organisations only, but the necessity has been keenly felt for including within it women's organisations so as to secure their active sympathy and support. A beginning was made by the Saroj Nalini Dutt Memorial Association which organised several women's societies (*mahila samitis*), of which five were registered during the year.

Bengal Co-operative Organisation Society.

82. The reconstitution of the Bengal Co-operative Organisation Society was an important event of the year. The society has been registered under the Co-operative Societies Act, II of 1912, and is now a federation of the registered societies in the Province.

IX.—Industries.

Government policy.

83. Since the constitution of the Department of Industries the policy of this Government has been to assist industrial advancement by (*a*) supplying correct and up-to-date information on commercial and industrial matters, (*b*) carrying on research for the most economic utilization of raw materials available within easy distance and demonstrating the results in localities where they are likely to strike root, (*c*) finding markets for local industries whenever possible, and (*d*) making provision for technical education and training necessary to keep the industries well abreast of the times. The policy, however, has lacked sufficient vigour up-till now, owing to the financial stringency experienced by this Province since the award of the Meston Committee. The retrenchment of Divisional Superintendents of Industries has deprived the Department of its limbs, leaving it without any direct touch with the people in the mufassal. The activities of the Department in the supply of technical advice, assistance and marketing facilities to the industrialists have been, in consequence greatly restricted in scope.

Research.

84. In the matter of research on raw material and manufacturing methods results of considerable practical importance were achieved during the year. An improved hackling machine was devised for the development of sunn hemp rope-making as a cottage industry. Improvement was effected in machines for spinning jute yarn on a small scale, for bending and marking umbrellas and for cutting conch-shells. Experiments were made in the Research Tannery for the production of the more important varieties of commercial leather from the available raw materials under local climatic conditions. Some chemical problems of the tanning industry also came under investigation. The cow-hides of different parts of the Province were surveyed and investigations were conducted into the manufacture of box-hides. Useful research was carried out at the Serampore Institute in the weaving of

coarse jute and coir fabrics and in the spinning of jute coir, sunn hemp and waste silk, and successful results were obtained in the extraction of cocoanut fibres.

Match industry.

85. The needs of the match industry continued to receive close attention from the Department. Many species of wood obtainable in the Bengal forests have been found on departmental research to be suitable for first class safety matches. Most of the factories, however, are using logs imported from Japan and Sweden, owing to the unfavourable railway rates and the scattered nature of the local woods. These difficulties were pointed out by the match expert engaged by the Department in 1923, and received the careful consideration of the Forest Department. It is already the accepted policy of the Forest Department to make particular plantations of several of the species mentioned by the expert. The Department has, however, refused to undertake such plantations for the species, which cannot be used for other purposes, unless it is satisfied that the industry is likely to cope with the supply. The Forest Department is prepared to allow special royalty rates, temporarily in order to create a demand, as has been done in the case of the Bande Mataram Match Factory. It was through the intervention of the Department of Industries that this factory received the concessions in freight for its timber from the Senchal forests. At the instance of the same factory, experiments were made on the Gengwa wood, and the most economic bleaching powder and process of treatment were evolved. In various other ways this growing industry of Bengal has benefited from the activities of the Department. Already 8 large up-to-date factories are in operation in or near Calcutta, producing about 13,000 gross boxes *per diem*. The rapid expansion of the industry was reflected in the trade returns for the year: the imports from Japan showing a decline of Rs. 14 lakhs in value, though an increase of Rs. 7 lakhs was recorded by Sweden. If carried on on sound lines, the local industry is expected to be able to meet all the requirements of this Province in the near future.

Technical advice and assistance.

86. In the present state of the industrial development of the country local industries are very much in need of technical advice and information. Much practical help was rendered by the Department during the year in this direction. Assistance was given to the Dacca Ayurvedic Pharmacy in discovering the cause of acidity in some of their fermented drugs, to the Jessore Comb, Button and Mat Manufacturing Company in finding out means of increasing their output and reducing the cost of manufacture, and to the Bengal Glass Works in neutralizing a greenish tint in the thick glass jars manufactured by them.

Oil industry.

87. The cause of the failure of several mustard oil mills and the acute depression of the industry in Bengal was the subject of a special enquiry by the Department. The situation is so serious that only 25 per cent. of the mustard oil mills in Calcutta are now in operation. The prosperous condition of the industry cannot be restored until improvement in the mechanical portion of the industry is effected and the oil extraction is subjected to greater expert control.

Special concessions.

88. Several industries received substantial help through the mediation of the Department in securing special concessions. On the representation of the National Tannery, the Department moved the Agent of the East Indian Railway and secured, as a tentative measure, the same rate per wagon for dry and wet salted hides and a special rate for finished leather. The Calcutta Glass and Silicate Works, the Calcutta Pottery Works, the G. T. R., Ltd., of Cossipore, also obtained assistance from the Department benefited from it in their difficulties.

State aid.

89. The need for State aid to industries by way of credit facilities was stressed during the budget discussion of the year 1926. A resolution was also passed by the Council recommending immediate legislation on this matter. The necessity of such a measure for small industrialists in this Province where, unlike Bombay, a comprehensive banking system is lacking, has already engaged the attention of Government, and a Bill is now under preparation. A practical beginning was made in this

direction during the year when a loan of Rs. 7,000 was granted to the Braziers' Co-operative Society at Brahmanbaria.

Industrial Education.

90. "The crying need of industrial India at the present time," observed the Industrial Commission, "is the provision of much greater facilities for the education of the artisan population." The lack of industrial labour in this Province, which cannot claim more than one in thirty among the workers in factories and workshops, must be held to be due to a certain extent to the inadequacy of the provision for the training of artisans. The possibility of starting artisan classes in large villages was investigated during the year. In result, schools with artisan as well as technical classes have been proposed for certain towns where there are none. Education for manipulative industries is at present provided by Government through an apprenticeship training in workshops along with theoretical education in technical schools, such as at Kanchrapara and in Calcutta. Another school, though a little different in type, is being established at Ishapur after the close of the year. For operative industries, there are industrial schools with outside practical training, wherever possible, which supply the necessary education. Government have accepted the suggestion of the Retrenchment Committee generally to stimulate industrial education with grants-in-aid, but have decided to maintain the four existing schools as model Government institutions. A weaving school at Suri and a Silk Weaving and Dyeing Institute at Berhampore were sanctioned during the year. The total expenditure for the year on grants-in-aid came up to Rs. 1,54,302. Two scholarships were granted for the study of glass manufactures and refractories in the West.

Cottage industries.

91. A survey of the cottage industries was made by the Department in 1924, with a view to explore the possibilities both in the production of their raw materials and in the methods of their manufacture. The Central Institute at Serampore has been doing excellent work for handloom-weaving which is the most important cottage industry of Bengal. Two demonstration parties

visited 23 different centres during the year and demonstrated labour-saving devices, improved looms and methods of manufacture. Administrative approval was given to 12 additional peripatetic schools as an experimental measure for one year, for giving instruction to the local weavers in the improved methods of weaving.

Factories.

92. There was a marked increase in the number of factories during the year, the total number of perennial factories coming up to 869 and of seasonal factories to 346. Improvement in sanitary conditions in factories continued to receive the attention of Government. There is a growing tendency among jute mill owners to undertake proper sewerage schemes, in spite of large capital outlay. Without the co-ordinated help of the municipalities, however, progress in this direction must be very limited. The sanitary improvements already effected largely contributed to the good health of the operatives during the year, which was marked by the absence of any serious epidemics.

Accidents.

93. The total number of accidents reported from registered factories was 2,680, of which 79 were fatal, 909 serious and 1,692 slight, showing an increase of 30, 178 and 250, respectively, over the figures of the preceding year. The introduction of the Workmen's Compensation Act is, no doubt, responsible to a certain extent for the increase in reported minor accidents, but it is difficult to explain the continued increase in the number of serious and fatal accidents, which occurred in spite of the increased attention paid to the fencing of machinery. A member in the Council asked for "a strong propaganda, backed by industrialists and Government and public opinion, on the lines of the National Safety Council of America, to preach, to publish and propagate the gospel of safety first in the mill area, docks and jetties and railway establishments". A thorough investigation has been undertaken by Government for the elimination of some of the more dangerous methods and practices in match manufacture, which came into prominence owing to a number of accidents from fire.

Workmen's Compensation. Act.

94. There was a growing knowledge and appreciation of the Act during the year. Accounts were opened by the Commissioner with the Post Office Savings Bank in the names of dependants under a legal disability and a sum of Rs. 19,932 was invested. The returns for the year 1925, showed the total number of workmen employed to be 657,890 and the total sum paid as compensation to be Rs. 1,36,375.

Labour unrest.

95. A greater harmony between the cost of living and real wages and the absence of exploitation of working classes for political ends accounted for a further decline in industrial unrest during the period under review. There were only 40 strikes involving 61,279 workmen, compared with 66 and 49 strikes involving 115,000 and 83,090 workmen in the two preceding years. Over half the disputes of the year arose out of questions of wages or bonus, one-fifth of these were occasioned by discharge, dismissal or disciplinary action against the employees and only three involved questions of leave and hours of work. In one case the dispute originated from a demand by Muhammadan employees for a recess for prayer, in another the strikers insisted on the discharge of a female hand, suspected by them to have used her witchcraft on the younger employees. Only 4 of the reported disputes were settled in favour of the employees, and 28 against them, while in 7 cases work was resumed either as the result of a compromise or pending negotiations. A new conciliation panel was constituted by Government with effect from the 1st April, 1925, to deal with disputes in public utility services in Calcutta.

Trade Union movement.

96. The Trade Union movement ran in the usual groove, without any appreciable change in the general position. The recommendations of the Reforms Enquiry Committee regarding the system of labour representation in Indian Legislatures provoked some criticism among labour bodies, and several resolutions were passed claiming separate electoral rights for the working classes. The nomination of Mr. M. Daud, M.L.C., as the Indian Workers' delegate to the ninth session of the International Labour Conference at Geneva, gave general satisfaction, especially to seamen with whose interests Mr. Daud is closely associated.

The visit of Mr. T. Johnston, M.P., and Mr. Sime, on deputation, to the jute mills in the districts of the 24-Parganas and Howrah for investigating labour conditions in the industry was an event of interest during the year. The Bengal Jute Workers' Association was started as a result of their visit.

X.—Public Health.

Public health and economic conditions.

97. "That there is a close connection between economic conditions and public health" says the Director, "is universally recognised, but the mechanism of relationship is not apparent..... In Western Bengal, the harvest is mainly rice, much of which is used for local consumption. Speaking generally, a large harvest brings increased prosperity, more food and better health.....

In this part of Bengal it is found—

"(*a*) that over a period of 30 years the trend of natural increase of population closely follows the rice production for the whole Province;

"(*b*) that there is a close correspondence with the yield of rice per acre and the birth-rate, and

"(*c*) the mortality diminishes with good rice harvests and increases with poor rice harvests.

"In Eastern Bengal, however, these relationships with rice harvests do not occur; in fact, the relationships are rather reversed. The explanation probably lies in the different class of crop grown in Eastern Bengal, *viz.*, jute. The demand for jute is a worldwide one, and the price of jute is, therefore, often determined by factors outside of Bengal. Falling jute prices, moreover, are associated often with good harvests; a good harvest does not, therefore, mean increased prosperity, as a good rice harvest does to the people of Western and Central Bengal. Conditions, therefore, tending to favourable vital occurrences in Western and Central Bengal may tend to unfavourable vital

occurrences in Eastern Bengal and *vice versa*, so that it is necessary to appreciate these differences in economic and agricultural conditions before drawing conclusions as to the health conditions in the different parts of the Province. On the whole, however, the conditions governing the production of jute are not so liable to fluctuations as those of rice production, and these vital occurrences tend to be more stable in Eastern than in Western and Central Bengal. The desideratum is the stabilisation of both rice harvests and of death-rates, and it would appear that the stabilisation of one would produce a similar effect on the other."

General health conditions in 1925 and 1926.

98. Owing to more favourable economic conditions, there was an improvement in the condition of public health in 1925. In births thirteen districts exceeded the decennial mean, especially Birbhum and Murshidabad, and in deaths there was improvement in every district except Calcutta, it being greatest in Birbhum, Bankura and Burdwan. The death-rate among Musalmans exceeded that among the Hindus in the Presidency, Burdwan and Rajshahi Divisions, while in Dacca and Chittagong Divisions it was slightly less. The births exceeded deaths by 218,624, giving a natural increase of 4·7 per mille of the total population, only Calcutta and the districts of Jessore, Rajshahi and Rangpur reporting an excess of deaths. Following upon the favourable health and economic conditions of 1925, the births recorded during the first nine months of 1926 showed a considerable increase. But partly owing to heavy loss of infant lives, which always accompanies a high birth-rate in Bengal, and partly to less favourable climatic and economic conditions, the general mortality of the Province also showed a considerable rise. In fact, nearly every district reported an increased number of deaths, and in some cases very considerable. There was a greater prevalence of malaria and kala-azar and more widespread epidemics of cholera and small-pox.

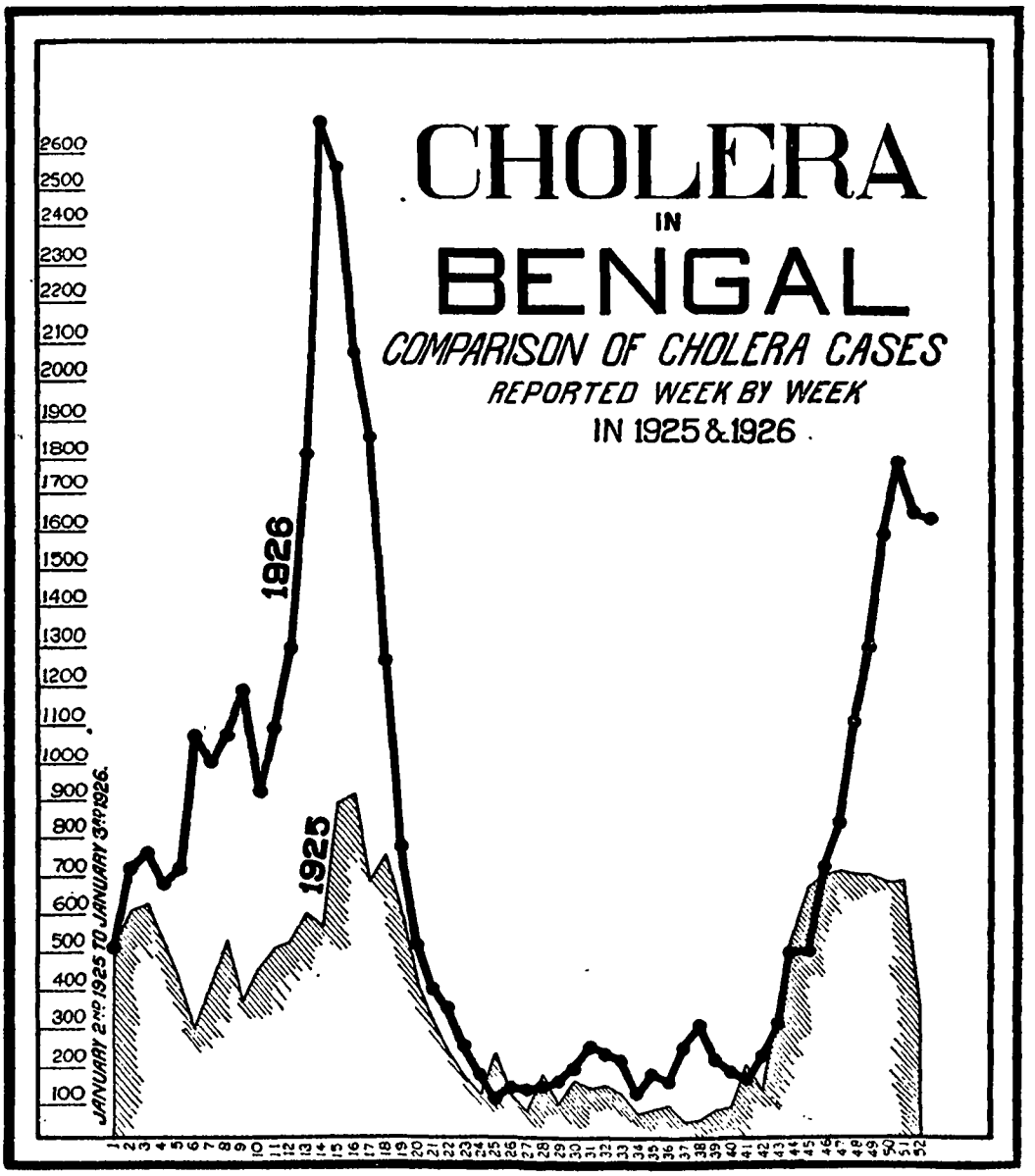
Cycles of epidemic diseases.

99. From a review of the statistics, it appears that both cholera and small-pox tend to recur with special virulence after an interval which is usually 5 or 6 years in the case of the latter and

6 to 8 years in the case of the former. The last outbreak of small-pox took place in 1919-20, and as apprehended it recurred again in an intense form in 1925 and 1926. " But in epidemic years it has been noted ", writes the Director, " that cases began to be numerous in the last 2 months of the previous year, *i.e.*, November and December. This serves as a warning that the disease may appear in epidemic form in the spring and summer of the following year." In November and December of 1924, the warning was not wanting. The death-rate in 1925 showed an increase of 233·3 per cent. over the figure of the previous year and of 17·7 over the decennial mean, and continued unabated in 1926. The mortality, however, was little more than half of what it was in the previous outbreak, a result which must in large measure be due to the strenuous efforts of the recent years to improve the organisation for vaccination and the number of operations performed. The trend of cholera mortality during recent years was markedly downward and, with the exception of the years 1915 and 1919, was far below the average. The number of deaths in 1925 was 34·276, the lowest figure ever reported since the introduction of death registration on the present lines. In 1926, however, the cholera tide seemed to have turned, and the Province was exposed to the worst epidemic experienced since 1919. The graph No. 5 shows how virulent the epidemic was during the early months of the year and also indicates by the rapid increase towards the end of the year that the epidemic has not yet spent its force. Serious enough as the epidemic of cholera proved, there is no doubt that it would have been far worse but for the strenuous efforts that were made to combat it. The health staff of Murshidabad District Board, to give an example, inspected 1,469 villages, chlorinated 1,460 tanks, 1,492 wells and 59 river ghâts, disinfected 1,307 houses, treated 1,029 persons and performed 9,191 inoculations during the period from April to October in 1925. A record of this kind affords remarkable evidence of the tremendous advance that has taken place in public health work in the Province during the last few years. In 1926 about a quarter of a million c.cs. of the vaccine was issued to local authorities for use in rural areas. Large amounts of bleaching powder for chlorinating infected water-supplies and

Small-pox.

Cholera.


CHOLERA
IN
BENGAL
COMPARISON OF CHOLERA CASES
REPORTED WEEK BY WEEK
IN 1925 & 1926.
1926
1925
JANUARY 1925 to 2nd JANUARY 1926.
2600
2500
2400
2300
2200
2100
2000
1900
1800
1700
1600
1500
1400
1300
1200
1100
1000
900
800
700
600
500
400
300
200
100

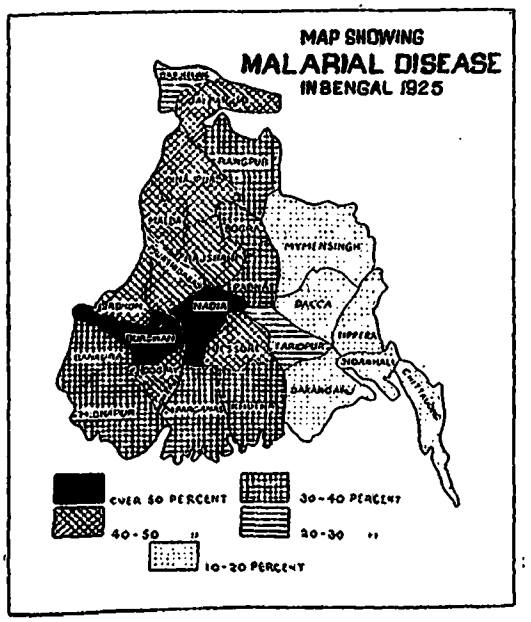
other disinfectants for houses were also made available, making it possible for the Health staffs under District Boards to do more in the way of combating the epidemic than had ever previously been attempted in Bengal.

Kala-azar.

100. The year under review saw a further and more marked increase in the mortality from kala-azar. While in 1921, the number of deaths from this cause was 1,552 only, it was 4,565 in 1923, 9,997 in 1924 and 16,766 in 1925. The increase was certainly due, to a large extent, to a better registration and a more careful diagnosis, but it is also probable that the actual mortality from the disease was much more than recorded.

Malaria.

101. About 500,000 deaths were reported in 1925 as due to malaria which formed 56·9 per cent. of the total mortality. Though owing to mistaken diagnosis many deaths from other febrile disease must have been included in them, it is unquestionable that malaria still remains by far the greatest scourge of this Province.



The rapid increase of the disease in several districts of Eastern Bengal appears to the Director " to be associated with the great increase of water-hyacinth, an extensive multiplication of village roads raised considerably above the surface of the country and railway extension in certain areas, notably Mymensingh, all resulting in an interference with flow of flood water in the *bils* and water-courses and across the surface of the country."

Baby week.

102. Another serious aspect of the public health of this Province is the appalling death-rate of infants. In 1925, the death-rate was 181·2 per thousand births, the highest being in Calcutta. The " Baby Week " movement initiated a few years back by Lady Lytton has now become firmly eastablished in the Province as one of the most fruitful public health activities, and is every year attracting increased interest and support. During 1926, Special Child Welfare and Public Health Exhibitions were held at 30 different centres in connection with " Baby Week ", and the educational results of this propaganda have been most encouraging. In fact, the demand coming from nearly every district for lantern lectures and demonstrations is now so great as to exceed very greatly the utmost efforts of the very small publicity branch of the Public Health Department.

Finance.

103. The average expenditure on sanitation per head in municipalities outside Calcutta was Rs. 2-1-7¾ per head, about one-half of which was spent on conservancy, about one-fourth on water-supply and about one-fourteenth on medical relief. The corresponding income of District Boards was 4½ annas per head, 8 pies of which were spent on medical relief, sanitation and vaccination. The total receipts of class I, III and IV institutions in Calcutta during the triennium ending with 1925 amounted to Rs. 88·8 lakhs, of which nearly 62 per cent. was contributed by Government. The equivalent receipts in institutions outside Calcutta amounted to Rs. 62·8 lakhs, of which 48 per cent. was derived from local funds, 16 per cent. from subscriptions and donations, 11 per cent. from Municipal funds and 13 per cent. from Provincial revenues.

XI.—Education.

104. On the refusal of the Council to vote for the salary of the Minister in charge in August, 1924, the administration of the Department had been temporarily assumed by His Excellency the Governor. The question was re-opened in January next, but as the Council declined to revoke its former decision, the transfer of the subject was suspended till the expiry of the term of that Council in January, 1927. The political atmosphere which prevails when a Department is controlled by a Minister was thus absent during the period under review. Conditions were also, therefore, much more stable, being less at the mercy of the vagaries of political parties. A year of relative opulence, it was marked by much consolidation of the position already won and by further advance in various directions. Expenditure increased during the year by over Rs. 20 lakhs to Rs. 377 lakhs, 38 per cent. of the amount being met from Provincial revenues, 41 per cent. from fees, 16 per cent. from private sources and the rest from District and Municipal funds. General.

105. An important event of the year was the passing of the Dacca University Amendment Act which made statutory provision for an annual grant of Rs. 5½ lakhs to the University. The income of this University being very small, it had to come up every year before the Council for a grant of a like amount since its foundation in 1920. Without in any way removing it from the legitimate control of the Council, the Act has enabled it to foresee its financial position with some degree of definiteness, thereby making it free from the uncertainty which the possibility of sudden unforeseen reductions entailed upon it before. The long standing question of a suitable grant from Government to the Post-Graduate Department of the Calcutta University was also set at rest during the year by the provision of a recurring annual grant of Rs. 3 lakhs. It helped to place the finances of the Department on a more stable basis and to remove the atmosphere of uncertainty in which teaching was being conducted with consequent deterioration. A feature of the discussion in the Council on the two Universities Universities.

was the insistence with which the "vital importance of preserving the liberty and autonomy of the Universities within the general lines laid down under their constitution" was emphasised. The problem of the reconstitution of the Calcutta University in the light of the recommendations of the Sadler Commission, however, still remained unsolved, nor could any final decision be arrived at on the constitution and functions of the proposed Board of Secondary Education. The average cost of educating a student in an Arts College during the year amounted to Rs. 145, of which Rs. 57 was borne by Government.

Secondary education.

106. With an additional allotment of Rs. 3 lakhs from Provincial revenues, it was possible to improve the pay and prospects of many teachers not only directly by making grants for this purpose, but also indirectly by insisting as a condition of such grants on the enforcement of certain rates of fees and standards of pay as well as of the institution, when possible, of Provident Funds for their benefit. The condition of secondary education, however, still leaves much to be desired. One of its most depressing features is the monotony of the methods of teaching and learning. Many schools are anxious to make their teaching less mechanical, but do not exactly know how to proceed. There is also a natural apprehension on the part of the authorities that the introduction of experiments may involve them in expenses which they will be unable to bear. This difficulty of finance is, of course, the greatest hindrance to the development of secondary education on proper lines. The large additional expenditure which it must involve will have to be raised either through new taxation or through greatly increased fees. As the proceeds of new taxation should first go to make up the enormous deficiencies in primary education, the improvement of secondary education in the near future will obviously have to depend mainly on a general rise in the standard of fee rates. This line of advance will, obviously, require long and unremitting endeavours on the part of both the Calcutta University and Government before any degree of success can be achieved. The total expenditure during the year on secondary education amounted to one crore of rupees, of which 18 per cent. was met from public funds and the rest from private sources.

Primary education.

107. A sufficient number of local bodies came forward this year with schemes for expansion on the half-and-half contribution basis, to absorb all the money available under this head. No further progress can, therefore, be made on these lines until more funds are forthcoming. The Panchayati Union Scheme failed to make much headway owing mainly to the non-utilisation by the District Boards of all the grants disbursed for the construction of school buildings, over Rs. 2 lakhs of which were reported to be lying idle at the end of the year. The total expenditure on primary education during the year exceeded Rs. 51 lakhs, 31 per cent. of which was met from Provincial revenues and 16 per cent. from other public funds. The solution of the immense problem of primary education, however, calls for much greater efforts. In the Census of 1921 only 9 per cent. of the population of the Province was found to be literate, while in 1924 only 12·5 per cent. of the children of school-going age, 20 per cent. male and 4·9 per cent. female, were attending school. Not to speak of free and compulsory primary education which will cost not less than Rs. 2 crores a year, even for putting it on a non-free and optional basis with any degree of exhaustiveness the present revenues of the Province are altogether inadequate. New taxation must, therefore, be faced if the problem is to be seriously tackled. Some definite proposals were formulated during the year by Government and public opinion was invited on them. The proposal of Government as regards finance was to levy, on the lines of the Cess Act of 1880, a cess of 5 pice in the rupee, of which the cultivating raiyat was to pay 4 pice, on the annual value of lands and on the net profit of mines, quarries, etc., and to empower District Magistrates to make equitable assessments on non-agricultural people who would be untouched by the cess. The proceeds of these taxes, along with all sums granted and expended by Government, were to form the District Primary Education Fund, the administration of which was proposed to be entrusted with a Board including the District Magistrate, *ex-officio* President, the District Inspector of Schools, the Subdivisional Officers of the District, 3 persons elected by the District Board from among the members

and 3 members of Union Boards or Chaukidari Panchayats chosen by the Local Government to represent the Unions of each subdivision. The problem of primary education varies so much from district to district and even from place to place within the same district that the necessity of such decentralisation in administration was felt to be imperative. The necessity of a purely *ad hoc* body also appeared to be equally great, as District Boards could not be expected to spare time to undertake the immense amount of new and intensive work that would necessarily be involved. To give the Board a start on right lines, the essential administrative experience was sought to be secured by the official leaven which might be removed when it had served its purpose. The Board was expected to maintain the public primary schools within its jurisdiction and open additional ones and help their expansion, to make grants-in-aid to schools under private management and where free and compulsory education had been introduced to take measures to enforce attendance. For securing simplicity in finance, account and audit and a general economy in expenditure, minor local authorities were to act as its agent in local supervision, erection and equipment of school houses and in enforcing attendance in compulsory areas. In consultation with the Board, Government were to have power to introduce free and compulsory education within an area where a sufficient number of schools for all children had been provided. These were the main ideas behind Government proposals, and it is a matter of satisfaction that public opinion is gradually coming into line with the proposal of new taxation.

Muhammadan education.

108. Much leeway has yet to be made up by the Muhammadans in the matter of secondary and higher education. While their proportion in the primary stage was 50·5 per cent. of the total number of pupils under instruction during the year, it was only 13·7 per cent. and 13·2 per cent. in Arts and Professional colleges, and 15 per cent. and 17·6 per cent. in high and middle schools. A general awakening is, however, noticeable, specially among the upper classes, which will no doubt accelerate the progress in this direction before long. The building of the Islamia

College was completed during the year. Along with the Moslem Hall at Dacca, it will undoubtedly be instrumental in providing the best of education for the Moslems of this Province.

Education of girls.

109. With the growth of female education a feeling is gaining ground in the country that the man-made system of education as obtains at present is altogether unsuitable and even injurious for girls. It will necessarily take time to shape the dissatisfaction into practical schemes, but already the Gokhale Memorial School in Calcutta has been conducting experiments on new lines with some degree of success. Of the total number of girls attending institutions of all types during the year, 41 per cent. were Hindus and 56 per cent. Muhammadans, over 95 per cent. of them being in primary schools.

Imperial Education Service.

110. The recommendation of the Lee Commission having been accepted by the Secretary of State for India, there will be no further appointments to the Indian Educational Service. Two officers of that Service retired on proportionate pension during the year and gradually, with the retirement of the existing members, the service will cease to exist. The creation of a Provincial Service, which will include the present Provincial Service and also replace the existing Imperial Service, is under consideration of Government.

Miscellaneous.

111. The revised curriculum for *maktabs* was introduced in all the districts during the year. An impetus was given to the training of teachers in vernacular training schools by the restoration, at a slightly increased rate, of the stipends which had not been awarded for some years past owing to financial stringency. There was a growing recognition in the country of the importance of physical training for boys in schools and colleges and a steady development of the Boy Scout movement was a striking feature of the year.

XII.—Legislative Council.

Election of President.

112. The election of the President by the Council, on the expiration of the term of Sir Evan Cotton, was an important development in parliamentary Government. "That the wisdom of Parliament has been justified in setting an early term to the period of tutelage" was testified to by His Excellency the Governor in his speech proroguing the Council.

Motion for the removal of President.

113. It was, however, not unnatural that an institution which lacked the atmosphere of conventions, customs and traditions should be rudely challenged by some members of the House learned with an unassimilated reading of parliamentary history. A ruling of the President, admitting an amendment to a resolution for which due notice had not been given, supplied the occasion. Though the admission of such an amendment is under the law entirely discretionary with the President, some Swarajist members took exception to it and accused him of being "arbitrary", "childish", "foolish", "insane". The offending members were thereupon expelled from the Council by the President. The incident was followed up by a motion under 72C(*4*) of the Government of India Act for removing the President from his office. The discussions on the motion made it clear that the grievance was not that the ruling of the President had been illegal or even partial but that the President should not have exercised his discretion and power in the way that he had done against those members of the Swarajist Party. What had been most offensive was, as the mover put naïvely, that ". . . . . he further suspended the leader of the most popular party in this House without realising the magnitude and gravity of the matter in any way"! In other words, it was not the ruling of the President but the *pique* of the Swarajist members which was in issue. The motion was lost by a large majority.

Budget discussions.

114. Through motions for nominal cuts of grants, a large volume of criticism was brought to bear upon the policy of the

different departments of Government. Excise, Justice, Jails, Education, Medical, Agriculture, Industries were all brought under scrutiny. It was complained that being dependent for a large part of their revenue on Excise, Government had been apathetic towards the growing consumption of spirits and had allowed the income therefrom to increase by Rs. 32 lakhs since 1921, that though the principle of local option had been accepted by Government in 1922 nothing had yet been done to carry it into effect. In reply the Secretary to the Government pointed out that as early as 1914 Government had declared that their settled policy "is to minimise temptation to those who do not drink and to discourage excesses among those who do", a policy which had since been strictly adhered to and to furtherance of which all considerations of revenue had been subordinated. As regards local option, Government had made enquiries in 1924 and found that it would practically result in total prohibition as there was a wide-spread fear of undue religious and social influence being exercised. Already public opinion was being largely let in through Advisory Committees and Licensing Boards: whether the system of Licensing Boards should not be extended and Advisory Committees entrusted with larger powers were questions which were under consideration of Government. The policy of the Calcutta University came in for vigorous criticism as well as defence from the members. "Secondary education must be removed from the control of the Calcutta University", urged Sir Abdur Rahim, and "be placed on a self-contained basis so that students leaving school may have proper education and . . . . may be able to fit themselves to pursue some avocation in life." He also strongly condemned the proposal to introduce Bengali as the medium of instruction up to the Matriculation standard, on the ground that Moslem education would greatly suffer thereby. The Hon'ble Member reminded the House that the constitution of a Board for Secondary education was under discussion and drew their attention to the Convocation speech of His Excellency in which, while recognising that it was a handicap to have English as the medium of instruction, he had said, "The interests of the

Excise policy.

Calcutta University.

large minority of Urdu-speaking Muhammadans in Bengal itself are equally entitled to consideration. We must not forget that even if the number of Moslems in Bengal whose mother tongue is Urdu is small, they will have the sympathy of millions, if their interests are not equally safeguarded." In criticising the industrial policy of Government Mr. Khaitan emphasised the need of State aid to small industrialists. "What really stands in the way of the people of this Province from taking to industrial pursuits", he said, "is the want of banking facilities . . . . . There is no institution whatsoever either in the shape of banks or in the shape of Government institution, which could lend money for a long period to any industrialist in this Province." It was pointed out in reply that Government had already considered the matter and a State Aid to Industries Bill was in preparation which would be brought in as soon as practicable.

State aid to Industries.

Acts.

115. Of the Acts passed by the Council during 1926, the most important were—

(1) The Presidency Area (Emergency) Security Act,
(2) The Bengal Cruelty to Animals (Amendment) Act,
(3) The Calcutta Municipal (Amendment) Act,
(4) The Calcutta Port (Amendment No. 11) Act, and
(5) The Howrah Bridge Act.

The first Act was the direct outcome of the Calcutta riots which occurred during the year. It gave power to the Commissioner of Police and District Magistrates, acting under the control of the Local Government, to eject dangerous persons from the Presidency area and, if not *bonâ fide* inhabitants, from the Province. This power could only be exercised in a state of emergency which the Local Government was empowered to declare after formulating reasons for so doing. It was limited in each state of emergency to a period of three months only. The second Act amended the parent Act of 1920. As the City Veterinary Department contemplated by the Corporation had not materialised the Government proposed to entrust the administration of the Act to the Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and made

amendments to effect the changes necessitated thereby. The third Act empowered the Corporation to initiate or continue legal proceedings in respect of breaches of building regulations of the repealed Act of 1899. The fourth Act increased the number of representatives of Indian Commerce from one to four. The fifth Act provided for the construction, maintenance and control of a new bridge across the river Hooghly between Calcutta and Howrah.

Bills.

116. A considerable number of non-official Bills came up before the Council during the year, of which only one, *viz*,. the Calcutta Municipal (Amendment) Bill of Dr. A. Suhrawardy was passed and the rest thrown out at one stage or another. The Calcutta Municipal Amendment Bill proposed to separate the area under the former Cossipur-Chitpore and Garden Reach Municipalities from the limits of the Corporation of Calcutta, on the ground that the amalgamation made by the Act of 1923 had not been of advantage either to old Calcutta or to the added areas. The assent of His Excellency the Governor was, however, withheld from this Bill as it was considered that consultation with the Corporation of Calcutta which was primarily concerned was essential before allowing such a controversial proposal to pass into law. The Bill, moreover, was so ill-considered and badly drafted that it would be impossible to implement its provisions. Of the other bills tabled by non-official members, one sought to increase the number of elected members in District Boards, four aimed at amending the Village Self-Government Act with a view to minimise official control and interference, and three proposed to find means to ameliorate the condition of cattle and to improve their breed. There were also 2 Government Bills—(1) The Bengal Tenancy (Amendment) Bill, and (2) The Bengal Motor Vehicles Tax Bill. The first was dropped by Government as the Select Committee which had sat on it proposed some radical changes unacceptable to Government. The second, of which the object was to empower District Boards and Municipalities to tax motor vehicles kept within their jurisdiction, was dropped on the recommendation of a Select Committee.

Resolutions.

117. The number of resolutions tabled for discussion was 107 or less than half of that in the previous year. Of these 11 were carried, 3 lost, 10 withdrawn without discussion and 5 after discussion. Of the resolutions carried one recommended the provision of roadways for vehicular and foot traffic on the Bally Railway Bridge at a cost not exceeding Rs. 10 lakhs. Attention was focussed on other urgent problems of the day, *e.g.*, the desirability of free primary education, of an adequate number of Veterinary Charitable Dispensaries, of Government assistance to indigenous industries specially in the form of banking facilities on long-term credits, of the survey of the waterways of Bengal and of their improvement and maintenance. The inadequacy of the number of Muhammadans in the Calcutta Police, which came into prominence after the riots, was also discussed. A resolution creating much storm in the Council recommended the change of electoral rules to afford representation in the Council on the basis of population with adequate safeguards for the interests of minorities.

Questions.

118. In their inquisitorial function also the members showed themselves less persistent than in previous years. Notices were given of 594 questions, of which only 348 were actually put and answered. The questions, as usual, covered a wide field of interest. The détenues competed with the waterways of Bengal in claiming the largest share. The grievances of assistant jailors and employees in the Government Press were freely ventilated. Information was sought regarding various aspects of the Calcutta riots. The policy of Government in the matter of rural water supply, their intention regarding the Board for Secondary education proposed by the Sadler Commission and the question of the separation of judicial and executive functions were all explored. The question of the appointment of Muhammadans to Government posts also appeared from time to time. Among other questions asked were those relating to free primary education, water-hyacinth, co-operative housing schemes, the Report of the Lee Commission, Pabna riots and music before mosques.

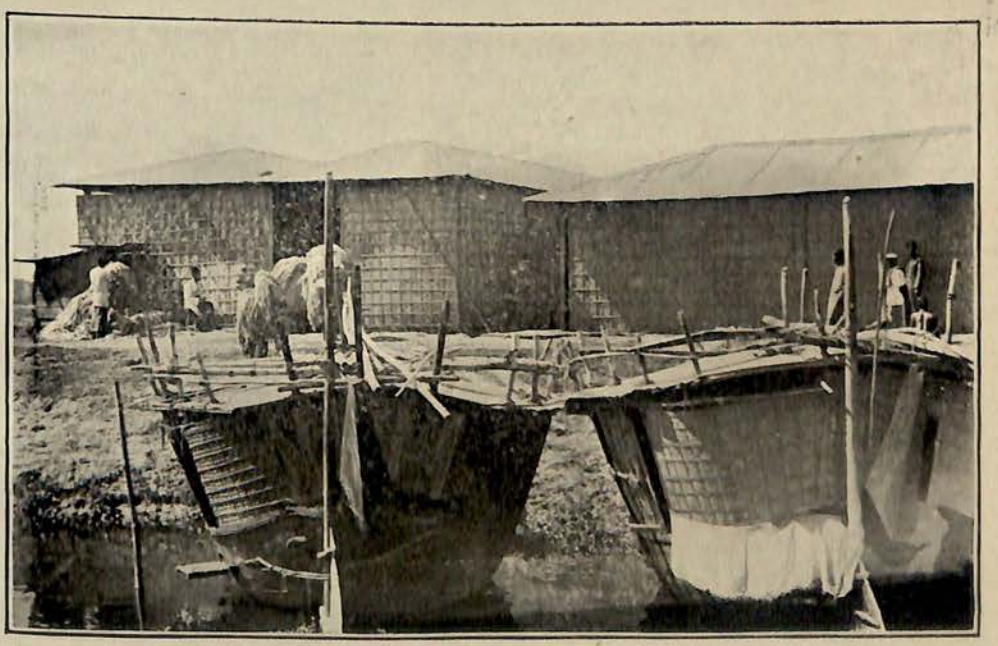
Comparison with the first Council.

119. Compared with the first Council, the legislative output of the outgoing Council was certainly small. Apart from measures to meet emergencies, like the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act and the Presidency Area (Emergency) Security Act, its activities were mainly restricted to small amendments of existing measures, necessitated by altered circumstances. No outstanding piece of legislation can be placed to its credit comparable to the Calcutta Municipal Act of the first Council. There was, however, a large increase in the number of non-official Bills. That only one Bill was passed out of the 30 tabled possibly indicates that the Council was aware of the danger of haphazard legislation. The number of resolutions and questions was smaller, but this moderation seemed to be due more to a greater practical interest in the problems of the day than to any want of zeal on the part of members.

Abdication of responsibility.

120. In proroguing the first Council, His Excellency Lord Lytton had observed, " The extent to which it is in the power of the electorate to secure a Government of its own making under the existing constitution does not appear to me to be realised as yet. There is no very marked difference of attitude towards that portion of the Executive which is responsible and that which is still irresponsible. Both are indiscriminately classified as the Bureaucracy and regarded as a fair target for invective." If that was true of the first Council, it was doubly so of the Council which followed, being swayed by the declared enemies of the constitution, the Swarajists. By removing the ministers, it blindly divested itself of the advantages of responsible Government in the Transferred Subjects and reduced itself to a purely advisory body.

Collecting Jute in a Village Co-operative Society.



Unloading Jute at an out-station.

Frontispiece to Part II.

Part II.

CHAPTER I.—PHYSICAL AND POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY.

For—

Physical Features of the country, area, climate and chief staples.
Historical summary.
Forms of Administration.
Character of Land Tenures and System of Surveys and Settlement.
Civil Divisions of British Territory.
Details of the last census.

See—

General Administration Report for 1921-22, Part II, pages 1—141.

Changes in the Administration.

1. Leave having been granted to His Excellency the Right Hon'ble Rufus Daniel, Earl of Reading, G.C.B., G.M.S.I., G.M.I.E., G.C.V.O., Viceroy and Governor-General of India, His Excellency the Right Hon'ble Victor Alexander George Robert Bulwer-Lytton, Earl of Lytton, P.C., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., Governor of Bengal, was appointed to be Viceroy and Acting Governor-General of India on the 10th April 1925. His Excellency Sir John Henry Kerr, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E., Governor of Assam, was appointed to be the acting Governor of Bengal. The Hon'ble Mr. T. Emerson, C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S., acted as a temporary Member of the Bengal Executive Council for 5 months and 27 days, with effect from the 10th May 1925, during the absence on leave of the Hon'ble Mr. James Donald, C.S.I., C.I.E., I.C.S. On the return of His Excellency Lord Reading from leave on the 6th August 1925, His Excellency Lord Lytton relinquished the office of Viceroy and Acting Governor-General of India, and resumed charge of the office of Governor of Bengal from His Excellency Sir John Kerr. On the expiry of the tenure of office of Sir Abd-ur-Rahim, K.C.S.I., the Hon'ble Nawab Bahadur Saiyid Nawab Ali Chaudhuri, Khan Bahadur, C.I.E., succeeded him as a Member of the Bengal Executive Council on the 30th December 1925. The Hon'ble Sir Hugh Lansdown Stephenson, K.C.I.E., C.S.I., I.C.S., was appointed to be the Vice-President of the Executive Council of the Governor of Bengal.

2. There were no Ministers during the period under review, and owing to the suspension of the transfer of all the Transferred Subjects in Bengal, the administration of these subjects continued to remain with His Excellency the Governor.

Relations with the Tributary States and Frontier affairs.

(a) COOCH BEHAR.

[Annual Administration Report of the Cooch Behar State for the year 1925-26.]

(Area—1,307 square miles; population—592,489; chief products—rice, jute and tobacco; military force—297 and 4 guns; present Maharaja—His Highness Maharaja Jagaddipendra Narayan Bhup Bahadur.)

3. The constitution of the Regency Council underwent certain changes during the year under report. Babu Jagatballabh Biswas, Revenue Officer and Judicial Member, Regency Council, having died, the Fouzdari Ahilkar of the State, with the approval of the Government of India, was temporarily appointed to officiate in his place. Rai Hemandra Lal Khastgir Bahadur, who was subsequently appointed by the Government of India to the post with effect from the 12th November 1925, took over charge from the Fouzdari Ahilkar.

State Railway.

4. The gross earnings of the Cooch Behar State Railway amounted to Rs. 4,63,076 and the net earnings to Rs. 2,50,203. The percentage of working expenses over gross earnings was 45·96 against 46·05 of the previous year.

Finance.

5. The revenue of the State amounted to Rs. 38,66,879 against Rs. 39,07,065 of the previous year, while the expenditure amounted to Rs. 40,61,381 against Rs. 37,31,471 of the previous year. A sum of Rs. 11,34,250 was expended in repayment of debts.

Crops and condition of the people.

6. The total rainfall during the year was 128·60 against 162·13 inches of the previous year. Jute and the *bitri* paddy were adversely affected by heavy rainfall during the first quarter of the year. The outturn of the jute crop was 50 per cent. of the normal, but the prices were unusually high and ranged between Rs. 14 and Rs. 25 per maund. There was a good harvest of the *haimanti* paddy, but the price of common rice varied from Rs. 5-8 to Rs. 8-12 per maund. The high prices of jute proved greatly beneficial to the cultivators, who would otherwise have suffered on account of the shortage of the *bitri* paddy crop. The tobacco crop was 62·5 per cent. of the normal and the cultivation of *rabi* crops was normal.

7. The number of subdivisional higher English schools was 4 as in the preceding year. The number of primary schools was 278 against 289 of the previous year. The Victoria College continued to make satisfactory progress. **Education.**

8. The general health of the people on the whole was good, though there were outbreaks of cholera and small-pox in different parts of the State from time to time. **Public Health.**

(*b*) TRIPURA.

[Annual Administration Report of the Tripura State for the year 1925-26.]

(Area—4,116 square miles; population—304,437; revenue from the State—Rs. 14,31,316; revenue from the zemindaries—Rs. 11,00,144; chief products—rice and cotton; military strength—197 including officers; present Maharaja—His Highness Maharaja Minikya Bir Bikram Kishore Deb Barman Bahadur, Maharaja of Tripura, aged 18 years; family—Indo-Chinese; caste—Kshatriya; residence—Agartala.)

9. The administrative training of the young Maharaja continued under his guardian and tutor, Lieutenant-Colonel O. C. Pulley. His Highness also attended a course of military training during the year.

10. Mr. A. J. Dash, I.C.S., continued to be the Political Agent of the State till the 12th March 1926 when he proceeded on leave. Mr. N. L. Hindley, I.C.S., officiated during his absence. **Political Agent.**

11. The total revenue of the State amounted to Rs. 17,53,961 against Rs. 15,42,710 in the previous year and Rs. 14,31,317, the average of the preceding five years. The gross receipts of the State and the attached zemindaries, including deposits and loans, amounted to Rs. 31,22,017 against Rs. 29,65,939 of the previous year and, with the opening balance of Rs. 9,41,183, the total sum available for expenditure was Rs. 40,63,200 against Rs. 42,72,207 of the preceding year. **Revenue and Finance.**

12. The total number of cases reported to the Police was 1,282 against 1,130 in the previous year. The number of persons arrested was 802. Eight hundred and twenty-four persons, including absconders, were sent up for trial during the year, of whom 187 were convicted. The percentage of stolen property recovered was 45·5 against 31·57 of the previous year. **Protection.**

13. The average rainfall of the year was 108·28 inches against 106·28 in the previous year and the quinquennial average of 90·9 **Weather and Crops.**

inches. Normal crops of *til*, mustard, jute and sugarcane were harvested. The outturn of cotton and early paddy was not good in certain areas.

Public Health. 14. During the year there were 12 deaths from small-pox and 193 from cholera. Of 395 patients treated for kala-azar 12 died and 243 were cured.

General. 15. The number of children attending schools in the State was 5,876 against 5,559 in the previous year.

Condition of the People.

[Report on the Land Revenue Administration of Bengal for the year 1925-26.]

16. There was no marked change in the material condition of the people during the period under review. While conditions were generally favourable for the agriculturists and the labouring classes, the middle class people continued to suffer from unemployment and the high cost of living.

There was no widespread natural calamity during the year, and weather conditions were, on the whole, favourable for agriculture. The outturn of *bhadoi* and *rabi* crops was satisfactory, being, respectively, 73 per cent. and 76 per cent. of the normal. The winter rice did even better and yielded a harvest of 92 per cent. of the normal. Though the outturn of jute was not satisfactory in Northern and in parts of Eastern Bengal, the growers had a prosperous year owing to the soaring prices caused by apprehension of a short crop. Almost all the agricultural products commanded high prices and benefited the cultivators.

The depression in the coal industry continued during the year, and as a result many collieries producing second grade coal collapsed altogether. The jute and cotton mills in the districts of Hooghly and Howrah were fairly prosperous, but towards the close of the year the high prices of raw materials resulted in decreased activity and led to the discharge of many employees. The rice mills had a good year on the whole and several new ones were started, giving employment to a large number of labourers, specially to women of the depresed classes. The tea industry of Jalpaiguri, Darjeeling and Chittagong continued to do well, although there was a decline in prices from the unusual heights attained in the previous year. Of the home industries weaving maintained its importance. A fair quantity of *khaddar* was manufactured in Feni subdivisoin and Comilla, while cloths prepared by handloom in Hooghly, Burdwan, Bankura and Dacca commanded a good sale. The rate of wages for skilled and unskilled labour remained high and the employees in most of the industries had a fairly prosperous year.

CHAPTER II.—ADMINISTRATION OF THE LAND.

Realisation of the Revenue.

[Report on the Land Revenue Administration of Bengal for the year 1925-26.]

Total collections.

17. The total number of estates paying land revenue was 1,00,093 against 99,893 in the previous year. Of these 93,209 were permanently-settled estates, 4,202 temporarily-settled estates and 2,682 estates under the direct management of Government. The current demand of the year amounted to Rs. 2,78,94,851 against Rs. 2,88,73,785 of the previous year. The decrease of Rs. 9,78,934 is due to a change in the *kist* dates of 4 permanently-settled estates of the district of Burdwan. The total realizable demand, including arrears amounting to Rs. 15,74,224, was Rs. 2,94,69,075, of which Rs. 2,79,47,846 or 94·8 per cent. of the total was collected. The collection represented 100·1 per cent. of the current demand against 100·3 per cent. in the previous year. The total remissions amounted to Rs. 95,195 against Rs. 97,279 in the preceding year.

Miscellaneous land revenue.

18. The total collections of miscellaneous land revenue amounted to Rs. 7·18 lakhs against Rs. 5·75 lakhs in the preceding year. The increase was mainly due to the sale of the site of the old church in the district of Chittagong for a lakh of rupees. There was increase also in receipts under the heads *Value of revenue abated under Act I of 1894* and *Other receipts*.

Redemption of land revenue.

19. The total number of petty estates and holdings, the land revenue of which was redeemed during the year, was 304 against 282 in the previous year. With the exception of two in Chittagong, these were permanently-settled holdings in the Government estates of Calcutta, the 24-Parganas and Hooghly. The total amount of land revenue redeemed was Rs. 465 and the price realised Rs. 13,882. The total revenue redeemed up to date amounts to Rs. 35,634 for which Rs. 8,85,669 has been realised as redemption money.

Coercive measures—(a) Sale Law.

20. The number of defaults and sales during the year was 11,482 and 1,023, respectively, as against 12,181 and 1,163 in the preceding year. The number of exemptions from sale under section 18, including those for petty arrears, etc., was 9,819 or 85·5 per cent. of the total defaults. The price realised by sale was 3·86 times the Government revenue.

(b) Certificates.

21. The total number of certificate cases, exclusive of those for cesses, fell from 83,451 in 1924-25 to 66,152. The number of

cases disposed of was 113·2 per cent. of the total number filed during the year against 72·6 per cent. in the previous year, and the number of cases pending at the close of the year was 19,586 as against 31,271 at the end of the preceding year. In the majority of cases payments were made on the issue of notices or on attachment of property, and actual sale was necessary only in 2,803 cases, or 3·7 per cent. of the total number of cases (74,923) disposed of during the year.

Other Revenue Work.

Land Registration.

22. The number of proprietary interests entered in the land registration registers was 1,016,649 at the beginning of the year as against 1,020,533 at its close. For want of funds the work of re-writing land registration registers on the basis of the record-of-rights could not be taken up in any of the districts of the Presidency during the year.

Partitions.

23. There were 215 cases pending at the close of the preceding year and 40 cases were instituted during the year under report. Out of the total of 255 cases for disposal 39 cases were disposed of. Special Officers were employed exclusively on partition work during the early part of the year in the districts of Rajshahi and Dinajpur and throughout the year in the district of Mymensingh. The incidence of cost per acre of the area partitioned during the year was 10 annas in Dacca and 12 annas 8 pies in Mymensingh.

Land Acquisition.

24. During the year the area acquired for Government purposes (including railways) was 277·03 acres and the cost Rs. 4,78,622, as compared with 227·18 acres and Rs. 9,05,821 in the previous year. The area acquired for local bodies and companies increased from 428·8 acres in the previous year to 678·78 acres.

25. The total amount of abatement of land revenue allowed to zamindars on account of lands acquired was Rs. 1,505-0-6, of which Rs. 77-2-8 was for lands acquired for the purposes of Government (excluding railways). The capitalised value of the balance of the abatement realised from the railways and other bodies amounted to Rs. 35,671-6-1.

Loans—Agriculturists' and Land Improvement Loans Act.

26. Owing to more favourable agricultural conditions during the year, the demand for loans was not large. The bulk of the agriculturists' loans was issued in the Dacca Division, and an advance of Rs. 4,000 was sanctioned for Bankura in portions of which there was a failure of crops. Advantage was taken of the land improvement loans only in the Presidency Division and in the districts of Bogra and Bankura and, to a small extent,

Burdwan. The general good conditions during the year favoured the recovery of the dues outstanding from the previous year, which with interest had amounted to Rs. 4,19,970 in agriculturists' loans and Rs. 1,10,131 in land improvement loans. The total recovery amounted to Rs. 3,39,048, and Rs. 5,481 was remitted.

Surveys.

[Report of the Survey Department, Bengal, for the year ending the 30th September 1925.]

Outturn of the year.

27. The main traverse programme of 950 square miles in the 24-Parganas and 730 square miles in Murshidabad and Birbhum was fully carried out.

The programme of revisional operations in the Chittagong district had to be changed as the settlement could not be based on the old maps owing to the extension of cultivation and changes in configuration caused by the cyclone.

Of the miscellaneous work done by the Survey Section a noteworthy item is the survey of the rivers Bidyadhari, Peali and Matla at the instance of the Corporation of Calcutta. The work was completed during the year and maps in 43 sheets, showing all topographical details, have been prepared.

Land Records and Settlement.

[Annual Report of the Director of Land Records and Surveys, Bengal, for the year ending the 30th September 1925.]

General.

28. Cadastral survey and settlement operations were conducted in 18 districts—2,416·38 square miles were cadastrally surveyed and final publication was completed in 2,518·63 square miles. The total area for which a record-of-rights has been completed now comes up to 44,876 square miles out of 65,785 in the Province to which the Bengal Tenancy Act is applicable.

Major settlement.

29. Major settlement operations were in full swing in the districts of Khulna, Pabna-Bogra and Murshidabad. In Bankura, Jessore and Nadia the work was in the closing stages, while in Birbhum and the 24-Parganas it had only been begun.

Bankura.

30. The settlement in Bankura was completed during the year. Resumption of alluvial accretions in the river Darakeswar was also completed. The total gross expenditure, including the cost of traverse and map reproduction of this settlement, amounted to Rs. 28,57,340.

Jessore.

31. In Jessore the year started with Rs. 80,454 outstanding for recovery of costs. After deducting collections and remissions, Rs. 17,773 still remains at the end of the year, all of which is covered by certificate. Nine hundred and seventy-six tenancies were disposed of under section 105 of the Tenancy Act and 475 are pending.

Nadia.

32. In Nadia the principal work during the year was the trial of cases under sections 105 and 106 in which three officers were employed. Printing and map work have practically been completed. Costs to the extent of Rs. 1,66,000 were realised during the year and about Rs. 82,000 is still outstanding.

Khulna.

33. In Khulna the attestation of the third and last block of the district comprising the subdivision of Bagerhat was done and comparative maps prepared for a number of rivers where the work of resumption is now going on.

Pabna-Bogra.

34. This was the last year of field work in the Pabna-Bogra settlement and attestation in the *chur* areas was completed. Objections under section 103A in the remaining areas were all disposed of during the year. Recovery was practically completed in the first two blocks, and of the total computed demand about 84 per cent. was realised.

Murshidabad. Birbhum.

35. In Murshidabad the programme for operations was completed earlier than in the previous year. Disputes were not numerous, except with regard to the boundaries of villages.

24-Parganas.

36. This was the first year of settlement in the district of the 24-Parganas. Field work consisted in the cadastral survey, *khanapuri* and *bujharat* of the first block of 806 square miles, including 78 square miles of rivers and 45 square miles of unsurveyed forest.

Minor operations.

37. Minor operations, dealing mainly with resettlements in Government and temporarily-settled estates, were conducted in the districts of Rajshahi, Malda, Jalpaiguri, Darjeeling, Dacca, Bakarganj, Tippera, Chittagong and the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

Waste Lands.

[Report on the Land Revenue Administration of Bengal for the year 1925-26.]

Waste lands.

38. Special rules regarding waste lands exist for Chittagong, Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri and the Sunderbans. In Chittagong and Darjeeling no lease of waste lands was granted during the year, while in Jalpaiguri the area leased was 3,725 acres with an eventual maximum revenue of Rs. 4,897, bringing the total area leased to 1,11,777 acres with an eventual maximum revenue

of Rs. 81,296. In Bakarganj wood-cutting was confined to Khaprabhanga and it yielded a revenue of Rs. 19,999. The waste land at Lata Chapli, at present used as pasture, yielded a revenue of Rs. 5,616.

Government Estates.

[Report on the Land Revenue Administration of Bengal for the year 1925-26.]

Number and management.

39. The total number of estates under direct management, including those belonging to private individuals but managed by Government, was 2,708 with an aggregate annual demand of Rs. 52,10,591 (excluding that of the Orphanganj Market and the Hastings' estate in the 24-Parganas). The percentage of cost of management on the current demand was 9·7 against 9·49 in the previous year. The scheme for the reorganisation of the system of management of the Contai *khas mahals* in the district of Midnapore was sanctioned during the year. The chief features of this scheme were the revision of pay of the Sub-Managers and Sub-Overseers and reduction in the number of *baruas* from 866 to 250 and in the rate of their commission from 1½ to ¾ per cent. on voluntary collections. The proposal for the reorganisation of the Bakarganj *khas mahals* was under consideration. The scheme, introduced as an experimental measure in 1924, by which Sub-Deputy Collectors in charge of certain *khas mahal* circles in Bakarganj, Jalpaiguri, Noakhali and Chittagong were replaced by Settlement Kanungoes worked satisfactorily.

Grant for improvement.

40. A sum of Rs. 79,295 was spent on miscellaneous improvements, tanks, wells, drainage, irrigation, embankments, repairs and construction of office buildings, roads and bridges, clearing of jungles and planting of trees. A total sum of Rs. 6,572 was spent during the year for the improvement of *hâts* and markets in the district of the 24-Parganas, Bakarganj, Tippera and Bogra.

Colonization of the Sunderbans—Bakarganj.

41. This was the nineteenth year of the colonization scheme in the Bakarganj Sunderbans and only a few more years are needed to complete the work. The scheme comprises an area of 178 square miles in the south of the Sunderbans, forming almost a solid block. Out of a total of approximately 30,000 settlers about three-fourths are Bengalis, mostly Muhammadans, and the rest Maghs. During the year under report nearly 12,000 acres of land were surveyed. The total expenditure incurred during the year on account of works of improvement amounted to Rs. 70,759. In order that the people might learn to rely on themselves, no land improvement loan was issued, while Rs. 600 only was advanced as agricultural loan.

There were 85 co-operative credit societies, under the Khepupara Central Bank, in the colonised area during the year. There were also 18 Co-operative Arbitration Boards which did useful work in settling petty disputes and preventing costly litigations. An annual grant of Rs. 2,004 was placed at the disposal of the District Board for free primary education in the Sunderbans where there are at present 71 primary schools, with 1,766 pupils. The total realization as royalty, *salami* and grazing fees amounted to Rs. 36,379.

Colonization of the Sunderbans—24-Parganas.

42. This was the eleventh year of the colonization scheme in the 24-Parganas Sunderbans. A sum of Rs. 32,582 was allotted for colonization work. A primary school was started in Saugor Island and a Co-operative Society in Mansadwip during the year. A large tank was also excavated in Estate Ramkarer Char (East) to supply drinking water to the settlers in the new blocks.

Roads.

43. During the year under report Rs. 3,03,693 was spent on roads and communications in, or leading to, Government estates of which, Rs. 83,254, representing 1½ per cent. of collections from Government estates, was supplied by Government, and the balance met from District Board and other local funds.

Education.

44. There were 3,525 schools in Government estates during the year under review, attended by 113,550 pupils against 3,458 and 105,705, respectively, in the preceding year. The increase in the number of schools and pupils was shared by all the districts in the Presidency, except 24-Parganas, Nadia and Dacca.

Wards and Attached Estates.

[Report on the Administration of Wards and Attached Estates for the year 1925-26.]

Number of estates.

45. The total number of estates remaining under the management of the Court of Wards at the beginning of the year under report was 73. During the year the Court assumed charge of 10 new estates and 4 estates were released. The number of estates in charge of the Court thus stood at 79 at the close of the year.

Collection of rent and Cesses.

46. The total demand for rent and cesses due to the estates under management during the year, including an arrear of Rs. 80,92,381, aggregated Rs. 1,36,75,666, of which a sum of Rs. 61,82,261 or 45 per cent. was collected against 48·9 per cent. in the preceding year. The standard of 100 per cent. collection on current demand was reached or exceeded in 51 estates out of 75.

Balance of rent and cesses due to estates.

47. The total balance of rent and cesses due to all estates that remained outstanding at the close of the year amounted to

Rs. 73,23,914, representing about 131·1 per cent. of the current and 52·8 per cent. of the total demand, against the corresponding figures of 106 and 48·27 in the preceding year.

Debts of estates.

48. The total amount of ascertained debts that remained outstanding from the estates at the close of the year stood at Rs. 85,56,664 against the corresponding figure of Rs. 33,98,389 in the preceding year. The ten new estates added to the list during the year account for practically the whole of this large increase, the liabilities of the Kakina Estate alone being Rs. 23 lakhs. The Satkhira Estates in Khulna account for Rs. 11½ lakhs, the Kalipur Estate in Mymensingh for Rs. 11 lakhs and the Bardhankuthi Estate in Rangpur for Rs. 5 lakhs. The principal repaid or otherwise reduced during the year aggregated Rs. 6,52,944, and the total amount of interest paid was Rs. 5,36,294.

Management charges.

49. The percentage of the cost of management on the current rent and cess demand of estates for the whole Presidency showed a slight decrease, being 13·3 against 13·6 in the preceding year.

Improvements.

50. In solvent estates the standards fixed for minimum expenditure on education and on works of agricultural and sanitary improvement are 1 and 3 per cent., respectively, on the current rent and cess demands. No standard has been fixed for expenditure on works of miscellaneous improvement. The total amount spent during the year under these heads by the estates in the whole Presidency aggregated Rs. 2,91,034 against Rs. 2,68,410 in the preceding year.

Revenue and Rent-paying Classes.

[Report on the Land Revenue Administration of Bengal for the year 1925-26.]

Bengal Tenancy Act—the extent of its application.

51. There was no further extension of the application of the Bengal Tenancy Act during the year. The districts of Darjeeling, the Chittagong Hill Tracts and the town of Calcutta continue to be outside the scope of the Act, while in the Duars portion of Jalpaiguri the Act is in operation only partially.

The Amendment Bill.

52. The Bill for the amendment of the Bengal Tenancy Act was referred to a Select Committee after its introduction in the Legislative Council. Some of the modifications introduced by the Select Committee were of such a radical nature that Government found it impossible to proceed with the Bill as altered. The official members of the Committee put in a joint note of dissent pointing out their main objections and insisting particularly that the *raiyati* holdings, which are at present not transferable except under local custom, should be made legally transferable, as proposed in the Bill, only on condition that the actual cultivator

obtained substantial rights in the soil. With a view to the introduction of the Bill in the next Council, an official Committee has since been appointed to revise it in the light of the improvements suggested by the Select Committee, without sacrificing any of the essential principles on which the original Bill was based.

Alienation of land by aborigines.

53. The special provisions of the Act, which impose restrictions to alienation of land by certain aboriginal tribes, were extended during the year to Mundas, Oraons and Sonthals in the districts of Rajshahi and Bogra.

Commutation of "Utbandi" rents.

54. The recent provision for the conversion of *Utbandi* tenancies into ordinary *raiyati* holdings was taken full advantage of and worked successfully in the district of Nadia, where applications for conversion, involving no less than 12,581 tenancies, were filed.

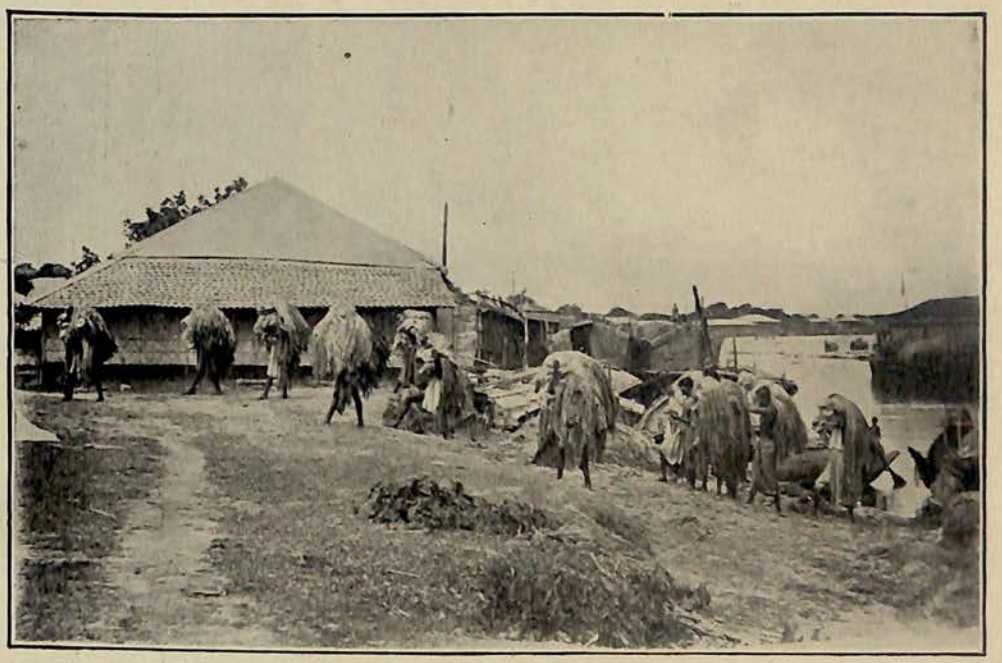
Measures to compel the issue of rent receipts.

55. Only in 14 cases were proceedings taken for failure to grant rent receipts. Four of these cases resulted in fine and most of the others were eventually compromised.

The Chittagong Hill Tracts.

56. In the Chittagong Hill Tracts, which are administered under the special Regulation I of 1900 and the rules framed thereunder, the survey of the mauzas where there is plough cultivation, commenced some years ago, was completed during the year. Four hundred and forty-two new leases covering an area of 1,200 acres were granted during the year, but there was also a fair number of relinquishments. The total current demand of rent from the lands brought under cultivation with the plough rose to Rs. 1,13,735. It was only Rs. 14,062 in 1900-01. With arrears the total demand during the year was Rs. 1,95,004, of which Rs. 1,24,860 was collected, Rs. 6,857 was remitted and Rs. 63,287 remained outstanding. The *Jhum*-tax settlement was concluded with the Chiefs for a period of 10 years, the previous rate of Rs. 5 per house or family being maintained. Miscellaneous receipts in connection with land revenue or rent from land amounted to Rs. 44,789.

There were 770 certificate cases for realisation of arrears, against 553 in the previous year, and 150 cases were pending from that year. Of these 145 cases were cancelled, 661 fully satisfied and 114 remained pending at the close of the year. No new Agricultural loan was granted during the year to the tenants. The arrears of previous loans outstanding at the beginning of the year were Rs. 29,795 principal and Rs. 20,677 interest. Of these Rs. 7,569 was remitted and only Rs. 28,167 remained outstanding at the end of the year.



Unloading Jute at Chandpur.

Weighing Jute.

To face page 12.

CHAPTER III.—PROTECTION.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITIES.

See—Bengal Administration Report for 1921-22, part II, pages 154-159.

Course of legislation.

57. Five Acts were passed by the Bengal Legislative Council during the year 1925-26:— **Acts passed.**

(*1*) *The Bengal Highways Act, 1925* (*Bengal Act III of 1925*), was passed to provide for the regulation of traffic on roads of the Public Works Department and for the prevention of obstruction and encroachments thereon.

(*2*) *The Dacca University* (*Amendment*) *Act, 1925* (*Bengal Act IV of 1925*), provided for the payment by the Local Government of an annual contribution of five and a half lakhs of rupees to the University of Dacca.

(*3*) *The Bengal Food Adulteration* (*Amendment*) *Act, 1925* (*Bengal Act V of 1925*), amended section 15 of the Bengal Food Adulteration Act, 1919 (Bengal Act VI of 1919), so as to authorise the Chairman of a Municipality to exercise powers of the Commissioners under that section by sanctioning prosecutions for offences under the Act.

(*4*) *The Calcutta Port* (*Amendment*) *Act, 1926* (*Bengal Act I of 1926*), was passed to provide for the erection of shelters for deck passengers out of the Port Fund, as recommended by the Deck Passengers' Committee appointed by the Government of India in 1921.

(*5*) *The Calcutta Improvement* (*Amendment*) *Act, 1926* (*Bengal Act II of 1926*), amended section 7 of the Calcutta Improvement Act, 1911 (Bengal Act V of 1911). This section was based on the Calcutta Municipal Act of 1899, and the change was consequent on the passing of the new Calcutta Municipal Act of 1923, so as to provide for the election of two trustees in accordance with the provisions of the latter Act.

58. The following Government Bills were withdrawn or rejected during the year:— **Government Bills withdrawn or rejected.**

(*1*) *The Bengal Local Self-Government* (*Amendment*) *Bill, 1925*: further to amend the Bengal Local Self-Government Act of 1885, to make changes in the qualifications of voters and of members of local self-governing bodies, it was introduced on the 14th

August, 1925, and was on the same date referred to a Select Committee. The Report of the Select Committee was presented to the Council on the 3rd December, 1925. The Select Committee recommending that the Bill should not be proceeded with, a motion to this effect was moved and carried in the Council.

(2) *The Bengal Tenancy (Amendment) Bill, 1925.*—This comprehensive Bill further to amend the tenancy law was introduced on the 3rd December, 1925, and was referred to a Select Committee on the same day. The Report of the Select Committee was presented after the close of the year under review. As the Select Committee had materially altered the scope of the Bill, Government decided not to proceed further with it.

(3) *The Bengal Motor-Vehicles Tax Bill, 1926.*—This Bill was introduced in Council on the 22nd March, 1926, but after the close of the year under review the Bill was dropped on the recommendation of the Select Committee appointed to consider it. The object of the Bill was to take power for District Boards and Municipalities to tax motor-vehicles kept within their jurisdiction.

(4) *The Bengal Municipal Bill, 1925.*—A motion for leave to introduce a consolidating Bill relating to municipal affairs in Bengal was rejected on a division on the 4th December, 1925.

Non-official Members' Bills rejected.

59. (1) On the 17th August, 1925, Maulvi Sayedul Hoque introduced a Bill to amend the Bengal Local Self-Government Act of 1885. This Bill was referred to a Select Committee on the 9th December, 1925, but was thrown out at the consideration stage on the 17th February, 1926, on a division.

(2) On the 17th August, 1925, Rai Harendranath Chaudhuri introduced a Bill to amend the Bengal Village Self-Government Act, 1919. The Bill was referred to a Select Committee on the 8th December, 1925, and considered on the 16th and 17th February, 1926, but on the last-mentioned date, the final motion to pass the Bill was rejected on a division.

(3) On the 17th August, 1925, the motion of Dr. H. W. B. Moreno to introduce a Bill to provide for the protection of cattle was lost on a division.

(4) On the 9th December, 1925, Babu Hemanta Kumar Sarkar introduced a Bill to amend the Bengal Village Self-Government Act, 1919. The Bill was rejected by the Council on the 17th February, 1926.

(5) On the 9th December, 1925, Maulvi Sayedul Hoque introduced a Bill to amend the Bengal Village Self-Government Act, 1919. This Bill was also rejected by the Council on the 17th February, 1926.

Non-official Members' Bills not proceeded with.

60. (*1*) On the 17th August, 1925, Babu Debi Prosad Khaitan introduced a Bill to provide for the control and management of Hindu religious public trusts and other Hindu charitable public trusts in Bengal. The member did not proceed further with the Bill.

(*2*) Notice of a motion for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Bengal Local Self-Government Act of 1885 was received from Babu Taraknath Mukerjea, but the member did not move the motion when called upon to do so on the 9th December, 1925.

(*3*) On the 9th December, 1925, Dr. Pramathanath Banerjea introduced a Bill further to amend the Calcutta Improvement Act, 1911. The member did not proceed further with the Bill.

Non-official Members' Bills pending at the close of the year.

61. (*1*) On the 17th August, 1925, Dr. H. W. B. Moreno introduced a Bill to prevent the practice of *phuka* on milch animals and a motion to circulate the Bill for eliciting opinion thereon was carried on the 9th December, 1925. The Bill was, however, rejected by the Council after the close of the year.

(*2*) On the 17th August, 1925, Dr. H. W. B. Moreno introduced a Bill to provide for pasture lands in Bengal. A motion to circulate the Bill for eliciting opinion thereon was carried on the 9th December, 1925.

(*3*) On the 17th August, 1925, Dr. H. W. B. Moreno, introduced a Bill further to amend the Calcutta Rent Act, 1920. A motion to circulate the Bill for eliciting opinion thereon was carried on the 9th December, 1925. This Bill was, however, rejected by the Council after the close of the year.

(*4*) On the 9th December, 1925, Shah Syed Emdadul Haq introduced a Bill for the preservation of certain kinds of fish fry in Bengal. A motion to circulate the Bill for eliciting opinion thereon was carried on the 17th February, 1926. The member did not proceed further with the Bill after the close of the year.

(*5*) On the 9th December, 1925, Dr. H. W. B. Moreno introduced for the second time a Bill to provide for the protection of cattle in Bengal. This Bill was rejected by the Council after the close of the year.

(*6*) On the 9th December, 1925, Shah Syed Emdadul Huq introduced a Bill to amend the Bengal Village Self-Government Act, 1919. This Bill was rejected by the Council after the close of the year.

(*7*) On the 9th December, 1925, Dr. H. W. B. Moreno introduced a Bill to provide for the registration of domestic servants in Calcutta. This Bill was rejected by the Council after the close of the year.

Police Administration in the Bengal Presidency.

[The Report on the Police Administration in the Bengal Presidency for the year 1925.]

Military Police.

62. The strength of the Eastern Frontier Rifles remained unchanged. The standard of efficiency was well maintained and mobility was increased by the formation of a flying column of three platoons for service at short notice wherever required. The battalion rendered valuable service in maintaining and restoring peace at different places in the Hooghly, 24-Parganas and Dacca districts.

Strength and recruitment.

63. Further measures of retrenchment were carried out during the year. Twenty-one police-stations were abolished and the force reduced by 121 men. The permanent sanctioned strength of the subordinate police at the close of the year stood at 23,938, against 24,039 in the previous year, the number actually employed being 23,533. The number of constables recruited was 2,154, against 2,461 of the previous year, 77·4 per cent. of them being Hindus and 22·6 per cent. Muhammadans. Local recruits numbered 640, of whom 44·2 per cent. were Muhammadans. A large number of the local candidates had to be rejected as unfit.

Health of the force.

64. The total admissions into hospitals during the year were 16,746 men, or 22 per cent. higher than the previous year. Lack of satisfactory housing, inadequate supply of mosquito-nets and beds have undoubtedly contributed to this deterioration in the health of the force. The necessity of proper housing in the mufassal districts of Bengal has long been recognised, but the normal resources of the Province have been found to be inadequate to finance it from revenue.

Discipline.

65. Of 347 criminal cases against the Police disposed of during the year, there were convictions only in 30 cases, the lowest on record. No member of the force above the rank of constable was judicially punished for any offence under the Penal Code; only two constables were found guilty of bribery and six of extortion. From the figures it would be evident that the efforts of the last three years have shown a distinct effect in improving the discipline of the force.

Crime.

66. The total volume of crime showed a remarkable decrease during the year under report. The figures for burglary (30,027) were the lowest since 1912 and for theft (19,515) since 1914. There was also a substantial decline in dacoity which touched the lowest level since 1920, there being 619 cases, against 818 of the previous year, and against 762, the average of the quinquennium. The decrease in that crime was spread over all the ranges, but it was greatest in Rajshahi Range, where there were 69 cases less

than in the year preceding. The improvement is attributed to more intensive patrols, sustained enquiries in areas where dacoity was formerly prevalent, careful supervision of preventive measures and also, to a great extent, to the increasing spirit of self-reliance among the villagers, who offered resistence to dacoits in no less than 64 cases during the year. Of the police cases decided during the period under review, 89·9 per cent. ended in conviction, involving 76·2 per cent. of the accused sent up for trial.

Defence parties.

67. The increase in the number of defence parties affords gratifying proof of the growth of self-reliance on the part of the villagers. There are now 1,450 defence parties in the Province who effected during the year 179 arrests, the majority of them without the aid of the police. Wherever these parties have been formed, active crime has decreased to a great extent.

Revolutionary crime.

68. The multifarious duties arising out of the application of the Criminal Law Amendment Act proved a heavy strain on the Criminal Investigation Department, but, nevertheless, it succeeded in bringing about practically a cessation of crimes of violence during the year. Some of the cases dealt with were of considerable interest and importance. A highly inflammatory leaflet under the signature of " Vijoy Kumar, President, Central Council R. P. of India ", which was circulated broadcast in Bengal and other provinces, was traced to the well-known revolutionary, Sachindra Nath Sanyal, who was placed on trial and convicted. The fact that copies of the leaflet appeared simultaneously in distant parts of India and that the search of some of the houses to which these leaflets had been posted resulted in the finding of arms and ammunition indicates clearly the existence of an inter-provincial organisation. In the Dacca district, two known revolutionaries were arrested in the course of a house search with a large number of forged ten rupee currency notes, including a block, and were tried and sentenced. Towards the close of the year, papers and correspondence were seized on house-search at Dakhineswar and in Sovabazar Street which disclosed the existence of a widespread conspiracy to import arms into Bengal from the Far East. In the house at Dakhineswar, nine young men were arrested, and among the articles found were a live bomb, a loaded revolver, a pistol, about 100 cartridges and a quantity of chemicals and apparatus for the manufacture of explosives. The accused were placed on trial before a Special Tribunal constituted under the provisions of the Criminal Law Amendment Act, and were sentenced to various terms of imprisonment and transportation.

Other activities.

69. The section of the Criminal Investigation Department which deals with organised groups of criminals enquired into many important cases. It captured a gang of young *bhadraloks*,

which included an *ex*-detenu and some Congress volunteers, at Chandernagore in the act of preparing to commit a dacoity. Another gang case in which 23 dacoits, many of whom are young *bhadraloks*, were concerned was still under trial in the Dacca Sessions at the close of the year. Other activities of the Department included the detection of cases of note forgery, arms smuggling and of a telegraphic money-order fraud, the capture of two professional coiners and an enquiry into systematic pilfering of tea from tea-chests while in transit on steamers and on the railways.

Rural Police.

70. There were instances of good work done by individual chaukidars, as also cases in which dafadars and chaukidars were either definitely proved or strongly suspected to have been concerned in dacoities and other crimes against property. One difficulty in the way of getting good men in the rural police is the low pay that they get. Union Boards now have the power to increase the salaries, but most of them have fought shy of it so far, because of the extra taxation which it must necessarily entail. The thana police receive considerably less information of importance now-a-days than they used to before: many Union Boards have yet to realise that if criminals are to be controlled effectively, it is essential that the police should be promptly and regularly supplied with information about their movements.

Cost.

71. The budget grant for the year 1925-26 was Rs. 1,48,78,000, against an actual expenditure of Rs. 1,44,13,068. The strength of the executive force was actually reduced, but the expenditure under the head "District Executive Force" was greater, owing to the normal increments of the force, the opening of the Detective Training School, the strengthening of the District Intelligence Branch staff and the arrangements necessitated for the visit of foreign royalty. There are, however, many schemes of improvement essential to the proper administration of the force which have been kept pending for times of less financial stringency.

Police Administration in Calcutta.

[The Report on the Police Administration in the town of Calcutta and its suburbs for the year 1925.]

Recruitment.

72. The vacancies at the close of the year in the ranks, mainly of constables, were the largest since 1922, due to the falling off in recruitment from the lack of suitable material. Of the up-country applicants a very large percentage failed to pass the medical tests. Bengalee applicants were few in number, and the majority of them expressed a preference for the clerical duties of "literate" constables to the beat or street

duties which ordinary constables have to perform. It is this aversion for beat duties which explains the significant fact that in the rank of constables there are only 138 Bengalees in a sanctioned strength of over 4,200.

Police Training School.

73. The complexities of modern city life make a large demand upon the intelligence of the police force, and it is of the utmost importance that proper arrangements should be made to impart to all ranks instruction in all the branches of police work. This is provided at present at the Police Training School where classes are held for all sections of the force. In addition to reading and writing their own vernaculars, all constables under training are now taught to read the clock, the English alphabet and numerals, and also the colours. Practical instruction is given in taking down the numbers of motor-cars on the move in the streets. Classes were also opened during the year to impart practical instruction in the use of the telephone.

Police housing.

74. Satisfactory progress has been made with the police building schemes for which a loan has been taken from the Government of India, with the sanction of the Legislative Council. Three section houses and one outpost were completed.

Crime statistics.

75. The total of cognisable cases again showed an increase, but there was little change in the number of coining and rioting cases, while the decrease in the number of true cases of murder, dacoity, robbery, burglary and theft is striking. Murder dropped from 21 cases in the previous year to 8 in the year 1925 and dacoity from 5 to 1, while robbery cases fell from 53 to 41, burglary from 1,206 to 736 and theft from 4,777 to 4,063, a decline under the last two heads, respectively, of no less than 470 and 714 cases. The decrease under the last three heads was accompanied by a corresponding rise in the percentage of convictions obtained for those crimes. Thus, in robbery cases the percentage was 58 against 51 of the previous year, in burglary cases it was 34 against 25, and in theft cases 34 against 27. The general fall in serious crimes can be attributed to a more efficient system of night patrols, better supervision over dangerous criminals, the conviction of the Fariapookur gang and a proper and effective use of the Goonda Act.

Revolutionary crime and sedition.

76. The action taken in October, 1924, resulted in checking the open activities of the terrorist party, and no overt act of terrorism took place during the year under report. The cases under the Arms Act showed, however, that attempts at smuggling arms had not ceased. The seizure of arms, explosives and revolutionary literature in Sovabazar Street and Dakhineswar towards the close of the year, and the subsequent trial by a Special Tribunal brought to the notice of the public the nefarious

activities of the terrorist groups. Two prosecutions under section 124A were undertaken and were successful. One was a prosecution for a seditious speech delivered in the previous year, the other was for writing and publishing a highly seditious book entitled " Biplav-O-Chhatra Samaj ".

Communal friction.

77. Communal feelings were further embittered during the year over the proposal to exhume the body of the " Pir " from the New Market, which the Muhammadans took as a deliberate affront to their religion. One serious case of communal riot occurred during the Bakr-Id, when a large number of Hindus attacked some Muhammadans at King George's Docks over the sacrifice of a cow. The casualties were 1 killed and 37 wounded. Twelve persons were convicted in that case.

Traffic control.

78. The rapid increase of motor-buses has made the question of traffic control one of special difficulty. During the period under report no less than 253 motor-buses were registered, as compared with 14 in the previous year and 6 in the year preceding. It is not surprising, therefore, that the number of street accidents during the year showed an increase, the number of injured and killed being, respectively, 1,575 and 125. Of these, motor vehicles were responsible for 950 injured and 88 killed, compared with 846 and 71 in 1924. Separation of the fast and slow moving traffic by restricting bullock-carts entirely to certain streets, the introduction of the one-way system in certain congested areas, reduction of taxi-cab fares so as to discourage prowling by taxi-drivers, provision for stopping-places in more of the important streets, are some of the suggestions under the consideration of the Commissioner of Police.

Mortality caused by wild animals and snakes.

[Report on the above and measures taken for the destruction of wild animals and snakes during 1925. Statistics of British India, Part V—Area, Population and Public Health.]

Wild animals.

79. The number of persons killed by wild animals fell from 224 to 173 in 1925.

Tigers were responsible for 23 deaths, against 34 in 1924.

Snakes.

80. The number of persons who died from snake-bite rose from 4,313 in 1924 to 4,386 in 1925. The increase occurred in the Presidency and Dacca Divisions.

Destruction of wild animals.

81. The number of wild animals killed was 1,079. Rewards paid for the destruction of wild animals and snakes totalled Rs. 5,759 and Rs. 437-2, respectively, as against Rs. 3,259-5 and Rs. 151-11 in the previous year.

Criminal Justice.

[Report on the Administration of Criminal Justice in the Presidency of Bengal during the year 1925.]

Judicial staff.

82. For sessions work, the staff consisted of 21 Sessions Judges and 10 Additional Sessions Judges employed throughout the year. Subordinate Judges, vested with the powers of Assistant Sessions Judge, were employed in twelve districts and decided 182 cases. There were also thirteen temporary Additional Sessions Judges employed for varying periods in different districts on sessions work.

The magisterial staff employed at the close of the year, including that of the Presidency town, consisted of 387 stipendiary and 674 honorary magistrates. One special magistrate was employed at Noakhali and another at Burdwan during the year. The special magistrate of Noakhali decided 157 cases. The special magistrate of Burdwan was engaged in the trial of a big bad livelihood case under section 110 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, and examined 211 witnesses during the period. Of the 387 stipendiary magistrates, 266 exercised first, 91 second and 30 third class powers.

There were 128 benches of magistrates constituted from among 262 honorary magistrates in the mufassal.

Offences reported.

83. The number of offences reported during the year, combined with the number pending from the previous year, was 392,583, against 376,060 in 1924.

Of the total number of cases under inquiry, 314,249 were found to be true and of these 263,049 were brought to trial.

Original Jurisdiction.

I.—Presidency Magistrates' Courts.

Total cases for trial.

84. Of the total number of cases brought to trial, 112,975 were in the courts of the police and municipal magistrates in the Presidency town, and 150,074 in the courts of magistrates in the mufassal.

The number of cases brought before the Presidency Magistrates, including the municipal magistrates, was 7,057 more than in 1924. There was a rise in the number of cases under special and local laws and also under the Penal Code. Under the latter head the most noticeable features were the increase in offences affecting public health and the decrease in cases of hurt.

The percentage of convictions before stipendiary magistrates amounted to 75·9 and before honorary magistrates sitting singly to 93. The percentage of convictions before municipal magistrates was 94·9.

II.—Magistrates outside Calcutta.

Cases disposed of.

85. Including cases committed to the sessions, 148,717 cases were disposed of during the year.

The disposals were distributed as follows:—

District magistrates	89
Subordinate stipendiary magistrates	124,337
Honorary magistrates	11,127
Benches of magistrates	12,971
Special magistrates	157

In addition to the cases shown above, district and subdivisional magistrates decided 36 cases referred to them under sections 347 and 349 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

The total number of cases disposed of by the District Magistrates was 125, the largest number having been decided by the District Magistrate of Malda (29).

Results of trials.

86. In the cases finally disposed of by magistrates, 208,673 persons were accused. Of the total, 93,675, or 44·9 per cent., were convicted and 114,998, or 55·1 per cent., were acquitted or discharged.

Punishments.

87. The sentences passed on persons convicted were as follows:—

Imprisonment	16,421
Fine or forfeiture	74,260
Whipping	169

In addition to these sentences, 4,573 persons were required to give security.

The fines imposed aggregated Rs. 8,62,417. Rupees 6,71,487 was realised, of which Rs. 1,12,332 was paid as compensation to complainants.

Miscellaneous proceedings under the Code of Criminal Procedure.

88. The total number of miscellaneous cases decided during the year was 8,145, against 8,645 in the previous year.

Witnesses.

89. The number of witnesses examined in the courts of magistrates in the mufassal was 355,627, as compared with 365,700 in 1924. The number who attended and were discharged without examination was 163,269, or 31·4 per cent. of the whole number in attendance, as against 30·2 in the preceding year.

The amount paid to witnesses on account of the expenses of their attendance fell from Rs. 2,85,607 in 1924 to Rs. 2,78,819 in 1925.

III.—Courts of Session.

90. The number of cases disposed of in the courts of session was 1,330. **Cases disposed of.**

91. There were 4,562 persons, or 44 more than in 1924, under trial before the courts of session. Of the 3,575 persons tried, 1,823, or 51 per cent., were convicted and 1,588 were acquitted or discharged, and the cases of 164 persons were referred to the High Court under sections 307 and 374 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. **Results of trials.**

92. The following sentences were passed by the courts of session: — **Punishments.**

Death	12
Transportation or penal servitude	70
Imprisonment	1,689
Fine or forfeiture	72
Whipping	6

In addition to these sentences 202 persons were required to give security.

The fines imposed aggregated Rs. 10,900. Rupees 4,955 was realised, of which Rs. 39 was paid as compensation.

93. The number of witnesses in attendance before the courts of session was 30,913. Of these 19,573 were examined and 11,340 discharged without examination. The amount paid to witnesses on account of expenses incurred by them in attending sessions trials was Rs. 1,40,599, as compared with Rs. 1,17,741 in 1924. **Witnesses.**

94. The number of cases disposed of was 47, against 41 in the previous year. **Cases disposed of in the High Court Sessions.**

Altogether 63 persons were tried, of whom 26 were convicted and 37 acquitted.

Appellate Jurisdiction.

I.—High Court.

95. At the opening of the year, 101 appeals from sentences or orders of criminal courts were pending before the High Court. During the year 787 appeals were preferred and 785 were decided, leaving 103 pending at its close.

Six appeals were preferred by the Local Government against orders of acquittal.

Results of appeals.

96. Five hundred and thirteen appeals against sentences of courts of session were decided. The orders of the lower courts were upheld in 417, modified in 42 and reversed in 19 instances. Thirty-five cases were remanded for retrial.

Two hundred and sixty-six appeals from the orders of magistrates of the Presidency town were decided, the orders being affirmed in 228, modified in 6 and reversed in 25 cases. Seven cases were remanded for retrial.

Of the four appeals preferred by the Local Government and decided during the year, 1 was confirmed. 2 reversed and 1 remanded for retrial.

II.—Appellate Courts subordinate to the High Court.

Sessions court.

97. The number of appeals disposed of in the courts of session was 4,411, against 4,084 in the previous year. In the appeals decided, 7,599 persons were concerned.

The appeals of 2,039 persons, or 26·8 per cent., were summarily dismissed; 2,457 appellants, whose appeals were admitted, were altogether unsuccessful; 1,022 obtained an alteration of sentence and 1,737 were acquitted. The cases of 344 appellants were otherwise disposed of.

In the case of admitted appeals, the results on the whole were less favourable to appellants than in the previous year.

Magistrates' courts.

98. In the courts of magistrates, 2,907 appeals were decided, against 2,845 in the previous year. In the appeals decided, 4,695 persons were concerned. Of these, the appeals of 604 were rejected, and the sentences on 1,820, whose appeals were admitted, were confirmed, making a total of 2,424 wholly unsuccessful appellants, or 51·6 per cent. Of the remainder, 642 appellants, or 13·7 per cent., obtained an alteration of the sentences passed on them, 1,386, or 29·5 per cent., their total annulment, and the cases of 243 appellants were otherwise disposed of. Compared with 1924, the results on the whole were less favourable to appellants.

General.

General.

99. Compared with the figures of 1924, there was an increase in the number of criminal cases disposed of by magistrates both in the mufassal and in the Presidency town. There was also an increase in the appellate work, but a decrease in the revisional

work disposed of by magistrates in the mufassal. In the courts of session there was an increase in appellate and revisional work but a slight decrease in original work. In the High Court, there was a general increase in the criminal work disposed of.

Twenty-two persons (5 each in Birbhum and Chittagong, 1 in Bankura and 11 in the Presidency town) were under trial for offences against the State. Of these, 8 were acquitted and 14 convicted.

Receipts and charges.

100. After debiting, as usual, to the administration of criminal justice a portion of the salaries of judicial officers, calculated according to the time which their returns show them to have devoted to it, the total charges for the year amounted to Rs. 37,85,802. Of this amount, Rs. 20,14,340 was for the salaries of judicial officers, Rs. 1,86,165 for fixed and temporary copying establishments, Rs. 1,70,243 for process-servers, Rs. 7,22,434 for other establishments and Rs. 6,92,620 for contingencies and refunds.

The receipts amounted to Rs. 20,89,338. Of this amount Rs. 8,89,034 was under fines, Rs. 1,74,671 under process fees, Rs. 2,65,276 under copying and comparing fees, Rs. 6,72,401 under court-fee stamp receipts other than the above, and Rs. 87,956 under miscellaneous receipts. Compared with the figures of 1924, the receipts show an increase of over Rs. 1,15,000 and the charges an increase of over Rs. 57,000.

Civil Justice.

[Report on the Administration of Civil Justice in the Presidency of Bengal during the year 1925.]

Judicial staff.

101. The permanent civil judicial staff employed in the Presidency during 1925 consisted of 15 High Court Judges, 21 District Judges, 10 Additional District Judges, a Chief Judge and six Judges of the Presidency Small Cause Court, two Provincial Small Cause Court Judges who exercised also the powers of a Subordinate Judge, 44 Subordinate Judges and 235 Munsifs. In addition, four executive officers exercised the powers of a Subordinate Judge or Small Cause Court Judge and two the powers of a Munsif.

There were also 13 temporary District Judges, 8 temporary Subordinate Judges and 3 temporary Munsifs employed for varying periods in different districts.

Original Jurisdiction.

I.—High Court.

Original suits for disposal.

102. The total number of civil suits for disposal on the Original Side of the High Court in 1925 was 6,808, against 7,665 in the previous year.

Of 2,966 suits instituted during 1925, 2,080 were for money or moveable property, 294 were mortgage suits and 217 were for immoveable property. The value of suits for specific money claims was Rs. 4,38,06,345, as compared with Rs 8,08,74,100 in the previous year.

Original suits disposed of.

103. The number of suits decided in 1925 was 3,179. The number left undisposed of at the end of the year was 3,629. The number pending at the close of the year was less than the number pending at the close of the previous year by 198. There were 3,285 suits pending over one year, showing an increase of 1,386 on the figures of the previous year.

Probates and letters of administration, etc.

104. During the year, 556 petitions for probates and letters of administration, and 16,971 interlocutory applications were disposed of. Of the interlocutory applications, 11,130 were disposed of by the Court or by a Judge in chambers and the remainder (5,841) by the Registrar and the Master.

Awards under the Indian Arbitration Act, 1899.

105. The number of awards filed and that of applications made in execution thereof were 217 and 110, respectively.

Appeals from the Original Jurisdiction.

106. The number of appeals pending from the previous year was 150, and 145 new appeals were preferred to the Appellate Side of the Court. Of the total number, 61 were dismissed for default or otherwise not prosecuted, and 151 were decided on merit. Of the latter the decrees of the courts of first instance were affirmed in 100, modified in 8 and reversed in 39 cases; four cases were remanded for retrial. Eighty-three appeals remained undecided at the close of the year.

Insolvency cases.

107. The number of cases under the old and new Acts pending in the Insolvency Court at the commencement of the year was 163 and 1,583, respectively, and the number instituted during the year was 293. Of the 2,039 cases for disposal, 357 were disposed of, the adjudication being set aside or superseded or the petition being withdrawn or dismissed in 57, and the insolvents obtaining relief in 300 cases. Two thousand seven hundred and ten applications of a miscellaneous character were also disposed of during the year.

Appeals to the Privy Council.

108. Six appeals from the Original Side were pending from the previous year, and four appeals were admitted during the

year. Of these, seven were disposed of by the Privy Council and three remained pending at the close of the year.

109. The following figures exhibit the financial results for the last three years, including under the head of expenditure the salaries of the Judges:— Financial results.

Year.	Receipts (*a*)	Receipts (*b*).	Expenditure.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
1923	24,53,475	10,86,816	7,33,797
1924	22,27,246	9,58,407	7,60,892
1925	31,95,519	10,00,073	7,66,906

(*a*) Including the duty raised on the grant of probates and letters of administration.
(*b*) Excluding the duty raised on the grant of probates and letters of administration.

II.—Civil Courts in the mufassal subordinate to the High Court.

110. The number of suits instituted in 1925 was 585,496, a decrease of 19,240 on the figures of the previous year. Original suits instituted.

111. There was a decrease in the number of suits instituted in all the districts except Chittagong, Pabna-Bogra, Noakhali, Khulna, Bankura, Bakarganj and Nadia. Local distribution.

The decrease was most marked in Mymensingh, Faridpur, Rangpur, Dinajpur, Midnapore and Dacca and occurred chiefly in rent suits.

The largest number of suits was instituted in the district of Mymensingh (56,506), where the number of money, rent and title suits (20,182, 28,454 and 7,870, respectively) was the heaviest in the Province. In no other district did the institutions exceed 40,000.

The number of suits disposed of was 593,960, a decrease of 33,209 on the figures of 1924.

Of the total number, 574,555 were disposed of by Munsifs, 12,095 by Subordinate Judges, 6,908 by Small Cause Court Judges, and 402 by District and Additional Judges. The figures show a decrease in all classes of courts.

112. Of the suits disposed of during the year, 105,839 were decided without trial, 416,283 without contest and 71,838 after contest. Results of suits decided.

Of the 71,838 suits decided after contest, 585 were disposed of on reference to arbitration. Of the remainder, 59,273, or 83·2 per cent., resulted in favour of the plaintiffs, 11,980, or 16·8 per cent., in favour of the defendants.

Applications for re-trial.

113. The number of applications for an order to set aside an *ex-parte* judgment or a judgment on default, preferred during the year, was 21,253. Of these 9,893, or 46·5 per cent., were successful.

Suits decided by Munsifs.

114. The number of suits disposed of by Munsifs fell from 606,805 to 574,555, a decrease of 32,250.

The average number of suits disposed of by each Munsif was 2,404, against 2,528 in 1924. Disposals under the Small Cause Court procedure formed 22·6 per cent. of the total.

The average number of contested suits decided by each Munsif was 286, against 291 in 1924.

Suits disposed of by Subordinate Judges.

115. The number of original suits disposed of by Subordinate Judges was 12,095, a decrease of 644 on the figures of the previous year. The decrease was in cases decided both under the ordinary and the Small Cause Court procedures, and was spread over both contested and uncontested suits. The number of suits decided under the ordinary procedure was 5,702 and under the Small Cause Court procedure 6,393; of these 28·5 per cent. and 15·7 per cent., respectively, were contested. The percentage of suits decided after contest, both under the ordinary and the Small Cause Court procedures, showed a slight increase as compared with the previous year.

Suits disposed of by Small Cause Court Judges.

116. The provincial Small Cause Courts disposed of 6,908 original suits, of which 704 were contested, or 186 less than in the previous year.

Pending suits.

117. The number of suits pending at the close of the year was 179,744, against 177,022 in the previous year. The increase is chiefly due to smaller disposals during the year.

Of the pending suits, 12,528 had been pending for more than a year, 64,652 for more than six months and 34,434 for more than three months. The figures show a marked improvement in the long pending arrears. Of the suits pending over one year, 8,771 were in the courts of Munsifs and 3,747 in the courts of District and Subordinate Judges, the figures showing a decrease of 762 and an increase of 271, respectively, as compared with 1924. A large portion of these suits (47·8 per cent.) were, however, pending for final decree.

Miscellaneous cases.

118. Excluding transfers, there were 110,331 miscellaneous cases of a judicial nature before the courts for disposal, against

109,364 in the previous year. Of these, 87,606 were disposed of, 215 were treated as suits on their becoming contested, and 22,510 remained pending at the close of the year. Of the cases disposed of 33,403 were decided without trial, 39,126 without contest and 15,077 on contest or on reference to arbitration. Of the pending cases 930 were pending over a year, Dacca being responsible for the largest number (202).

III.—Calcutta Small Cause Court.

119. The number of suits instituted and decided in the Presidency Court of Small Causes during 1925 and the number pending at its close were 23,892, 24,566 and 3,863, respectively. The number instituted and pending showed an increase of 410 and 230, respectively, while the number disposed of was smaller than in 1924 by 877. Fifty-nine applications were filed under section 626 of the Calcutta Municipal Act (Bengal Act III of 1899).

The increase in institutions was in classes of suits, valued at sums not exceeding Rs. 100, Rs. 500 and Rs. 1,000.

120. Of the suits disposed of, 1,055 were decided without trial, 19,007 without contest and 4,504 on contest or on reference to arbitration. **Mode of diposal.**

Of the 3,863 suits pending at the close of the year, 902 were over three months old, against 772 in 1924.

Appellate Jurisdiction.

I.—High Court.

121. One hundred and forty-five appeals from decisions on the Original Side were filed during the year and 150 were pending at its commencement. Of the total, 212 were decided and 83 remained pending at the close of the year. The number of appeals disposed of was 31 more than in 1924. On the Appellate Side 81 such appeals were filed during the year and 29 were pending at its commencement. Of these 74 were decided and 36 remained pending at the close of the year. **Appeals under section 15 of the letters patent.**

II.—Appeals from the Subordinate Civil Courts.

122. The following statement shows the number of first and second appeals from the decrees and orders of the provincial courts of original and appellate jurisdiction, respectively, which came **Appeals to the High Court from subordinate courts.**

before the High Court and were decided during the year. The figures include appeals from the courts of Assam:—

	Remaining at the close of 1924.	Brought before the court in 1925.	Disposed of in 1925.	Remaining at the close of 1925.
FIRST APPEALS.				
From original decrees ..	561	268	316(a)	513
From original orders ..	247	295	268	274
SECOND APPEALS.				
From appellate decrees ..	4,446	2,735	3,270(b)	3,911
From appellate orders ..	287	220	230	277
Total ..	5,441	3,518	4,084	4,875

(a) Including 69 will cases.
(b) Of these, 295 were decided by a single Judge.

Results of appeals.

123. The following table shows the results of appeals decided by the High Court affecting District Judges and Subordinate Judges:—

	Affirmed.		Modified or reversed.	
	District Judges.	Subordinate Judges.	District Judges.	Subordinate Judges.
Appeals from—				
Original decrees ..	55	81	19	71
Appellate decrees ..	824	552	207	150
Miscellaneous appeals	95	89	44	45

III.—Appellate Courts subordinate to the High Court.

Appeals for disposal.

124. Excluding transfers, the number of appeals for disposal before the subordinate courts in Bengal in 1925 was 36,238, against 33,381 in 1924.

The number of appeals instituted during the year was 17,003, against 16,696 in the previous year. Of these, 7,774 were in rent suits, 7,190 in title suits and 2,039 in suits for money or moveables. The numbers show an increase in appeals in title and money suits, but a decrease in rent suits.

Appeals disposed of.

125. The number of appeals decided was 16,528 and shows an increase of 1,018 in the number decided by District and Additional Judges and of 941 in that decided by Subordinate Judges, as compared with the previous year.

The increase in disposals was spread over 14 districts and was largest in Jessore (514), followed by Rangpur (427), Chittagong (414) and Dacca (336).

On the other hand, there was a noticeable decrease in Bakarganj (418), which was due to the fact that the staff devoted less time to civil work during the year.

Appeals pending.

126. The number of appeals pending at the close of the year was 19,710, and was more than that of 1924 by 898.

The number of appeals over one year old rose from 5,128 to 5,291. Noakhali was accountable for the largest number, *viz.*, 1,487.

Results of appeals.

127. The results of the appeals decided during the year were as follows: In 8,403 cases, or 50·8 per cent. of the whole, the judgment of the lower courts was affirmed; in 2,276 cases, or 13·8 per cent., it was modified and in 2,650 cases, or 16 per cent., it was reversed. Eight hundred and ninety-one, or 5·4 per cent., were remanded and 2,308, or 14 per cent., were either not prosecuted or were dismissed for default. The results are less favourable to the lower courts than in the preceding year.

General.

General.

128. There was a noticeable decrease in the number of original suits instituted during the year, but the decrease in the number of suits disposed of being still larger, there was an increase in the pending file. There was an increase in the number of appeals preferred in the lower courts, but the number disposed of, though larger than in the previous year, could not keep pace with the number preferred, with the result that the pending file rose. The number of year-old suits was smaller and that of year-old appeals larger than in the previous year. On the Appellate Side of the High Court, both the institutions and disposals were larger than in the previous year, and there was a decrease in the pending file.

Receipts and charges of the civil courts.

129. The receipts of the civil courts in Bengal and of the High Court amounted to Rs. 2,03,71,742, showing an increase of Rs. 11,16,578, and the charges to Rs. 89,25,885, showing an increase of Rs. 3,02,050, on those of 1924. Including the amount

realised on account of duty on probates, etc., the profit to Government from civil litigation amounted to Rs. 1,14,45,857: excluding this item, it amounted to Rs. 90,60,264. Details of the receipts and charges are as follows :—

RECEIPTS.

	Rs.
In stamps—	
Process fees	26,45,795
Other fees	1,65,69 818
In cash or special stamps—	
Other receipts	4,31,969
Copying and comparing fees	7,21,381
Fines	2,779
Total	2,03,71,742

CHARGES.

Salaries of judicial officers	34,55,475
Establishment—	
Process-servers	12,33,668
Others	28,91,842
Copyists' fees	5,36,541
Contingencies and refunds	8,08,359
Total	89,25,885

There was an increase in receipts only under the head "Other fees", which amounted to more than Rs. 12,97,000. The increase in expenditure was under all heads except "Contingencies and refunds" and was most marked under the head "Salaries of Judicial Officers", which was Rs. 2,92,000 more than in the previous year.

Civil Justice in the scheduled district of the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

130. The total number of civil suits instituted during the year 1925 in the civil courts of the scheduled district of Chittagong Hill Tracts was 542, all being for money or moveable property. The total number of civil suits for disposal was 625. Of these 93 were contested and 171 were without trial, the number pending at the close of the year being 65. The total number of appeals from decrees was 40, all being disposed of during the year. The number of miscellaneous appeals was 9, all being disposed of during the year. The number of applications for execution of decrees was 1,076, of which 280 were pending at the close of the year.

Jails.

[The Report on the Administration of the Jail Department in the Presidency of Bengal for the year 1925.]

Jail population. (Health and mortality.)

131. There was a welcome diminution in the number of prisoners. The average daily number fell from 13,476 to 12,653. There has been a steady improvement in health during recent years; while the average daily number of sick prisoners in 1920 was 53 per thousand, in 1925 the number was 34, and the death rate in 1925, 13 per thousand, is the lowest on record.

The cost of guarding and maintaining prisoners increased from about Rs. 1,65,000 in 1924 to Rs. 24,39,669 in 1925.

Juvenile offenders. Juvenile Jail.

132. The number of juvenile convicts of less than 16 years of age was 128 in 1925, against 255 in 1924. In pursuance of the policy formulated by Government in the previous year, considerable structural alteration of the Juvenile Jail at Alipore was carried out, an officer with experience of technical education was appointed as Superintendent, and classes for technical and general education were introduced for the prisoners. The jail has been notified as a reformatory school under the Bengal Children Act, and receives youthful offenders between the ages of 12 and 15 years from Calcutta and its suburbs and from Howrah. The next step, which is proposed to be taken in 1927, is to establish an institution for offenders from 16 to 21 years of age on the lines of the Borstal School in England. As to offenders under 12 years of age, it is hoped to provide for them in industrial schools under the Bengal Children Act.

Visitors and religious teachers in jails.

133. Useful work has again been done by the Boards of Visitors, especially in drawing the attention of the Inspector-General of Prisons and Government to the needs of their jails. There has, however, been a decrease in the number of individual visits by both official and non-official visitors. Provision was made during the year for conveyance allowance for honorary religious teachers, with a view to secure their services more easily, and for every jail.

Advisory Board.

134. The Advisory Board examined the cases of 308 prisoners with long sentences, and recommended the release of 148; all but seven of these were released by Government. The release of these well-behaved prisoners, most of whom were convict officers, has, incidentally, increased the need for more warders.

Prisoners' Aid Societies.

135. The Calcutta Prisoners' Aid Society and the authorities of The Refuge rendered valuable help to prisoners, especially to juvenile prisoners, after release. But the good work done by the

societies is limited to Calcutta, and the need for a special organisation to look after, and find employment for, boys after release is as great as ever.

Prisoners' earnings.

136. The net earnings on manufactures fell from Rs. 7,57,131 in 1924 to Rs. 6,49,549 in 1925, and the average earnings of prisoners sentenced to labour from Rs. 74-10 to Rs. 67-13. The percentage of prisoners employed in manufactures was slightly higher in 1925 than in 1924.

Short sentences.

137. Short sentences have increased in number. Such sentences cannot be reformative, and their deterrent value is small, but so long as the only forms of punishment provided by the law for most offences are fine and imprisonment, it is difficult for courts to avoid imposing short terms of imprisonment.

Under-trial prisoners.

138. The average period of detention of under-trial prisoners in jails was the same as in last year in magistrates' cases, but larger in sessions cases. Calcutta showed the worst figure in sessions cases, the average period of detention being not less than 120 days; it was bad in Barisal (84 days), Bogra (78 days) and Pabna (76 days). As to magistrates' cases, detention was by far the worst in Berhampore, the average being 78 days, Bankura with 30 days coming next. In all these cases the average period is far larger than that of 1924, and enquiries are being made to ascertain the reason.

Registration.

[Statistical Returns of the Registration Department in the Presidency of Bengal for the year 1925.]

Progress and statistics of 1925.

139. There was no change in the number of offices during the year, which remained at 408.

Increase in the rate of registration fees.

140. The total income of the Department showed an increase from Rs. 25,35,470 in 1924 to Rs. 34,09,994 in 1925, *i.e.*, by 34·4 per cent. This unusual increase was due mainly to the revision of the registration fees, which under Article A on documents of value above Rs. 250 and under all other articles except J(2) and K(1) (*a*) were doubled with effect from the 1st of June, 1925. The increase in the number of registrations, which rose from 1,800,452 in 1924 to 1,994,025 in 1925, *i.e.*, by 10·7 per cent., was also a contributory factor. The expenditure, excluding refunds, increased from Rs. 16,99,182 in 1924 to Rs. 17,75,394 in 1925, *i.e.*, by 4·4 per cent., and was due mainly to additional expenditure on extra copying establishment and on office charges.

Working of the Marriage Act, III of 1872.

141. Forty-four marriages were registered during the calendar year 1925, under the Marriage Act, III of 1872, against 57 in 1924.

Of these, 32 were registered in Calcutta, 3 in Howrah, 4 in Dacca, 2 in Chittagong and 1 each in Midnapore, Murshidabad and Faridpur. At the end of the year 1925, there were, as in the previous year, 45 Marriage Registrars including *ex-officio* Registrars.

Working of the Muhammadan Registration Act and the Kazis' Act.

142. There were 346 offices at the end of the year 1925, against 359 at the close of the preceding year. The total number of ceremonies registered during the year was 91,018, against 83,644 in 1924, showing an increase of 8·8 per cent. The total receipts of Muhammadan Registrars and Kazis, including gratuities amounted to Rs. 1,88,428-0-6 during 1925, against Rs. 1,70,233-15-6 in 1924, showing an increase of 10·6 per cent. The increase in the number of registrations, as well as in the amount of receipts, may be attributed to the growing appreciation of the benefits of registration under the Act.

Working of the Indian Companies Act, 1913 (VII of 1913), Provident Insurance Societies Act, 1912 (V of 1912), and Societies Registration Act, 1860 (XXI of 1860).

143. At the close of the year under report there were 2,810 companies, limited by shares, in operation in Bengal, with a total nominal capital of Rs. 3,37,23,39,574 and a paid-up capital of Rs. 1,18,16,94,591, as compared with 2,644 companies with Rs. 3,28,68,06,074 nominal and Rs. 1,18,09,53,505 paid-up capital at the end of the previous year. Two hundred and seventy-three new companies and societies, or one hundred more than the number incorporated in 1924-25, were registered. Of these 241 were limited by shares, 4 were limited by guarantee and 28 representing various social and philanthropic objects were incorporated under the Societies Registration Act, 1860. Four hundred and fifty-nine companies increased, while 73 companies reduced their capital during the year, against 562 and 40, respectively, in the previous year. Seventy companies ceased to work, went into liquidation, were finally dissolved or otherwise became defunct, as compared with 127 companies in 1924-25. Eighty-two companies went into liquidation during the year, but were not finally dissolved. No investigation into the internal affairs of a company was directed under section 138 of the Act. The practice of appealing to the Registrar to interfere in the internal affairs of companies still continued. Eighty-one prosecutions were instituted during the year and five were pending from the preceding year. Of these, 66 ended in conviction, 12 were withdrawn or otherwise disposed of, and 8 remained pending at the close of the year. The net receipts of the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies from all sources aggregated Rs. 75,550, against Rs. 58,120 in 1924-25. The increase is attributable to the greater number of new companies registered during the year. Two new societies were registered under the Provident Insurance Societies Act, 1912, during the year, thus increasing the total number of existing societies to six.

Three permanent unrestricted auditors' certificates were granted during the year, under the provisions of section 144 of the Act and the Rules relating thereto, the recipients being the holders of the Government Diploma in Accountancy of the Sydenham College of Commerce and Economics, Bombay.

Municipal and Local Self-Government Departments.

Municipalities outside Calcutta.

[Reports from the Commissioners of Divisions on the working of Municipalities in the Bengal Presidency (except Calcutta) during the year 1925-26.]

Number of municipalities.

144. The number of municipalities was the same, *viz.*, 115, as in the preceding year. The boundaries of the Jalpaiguri Municipality were extended so as to include a contiguous area of ·18 square mile.

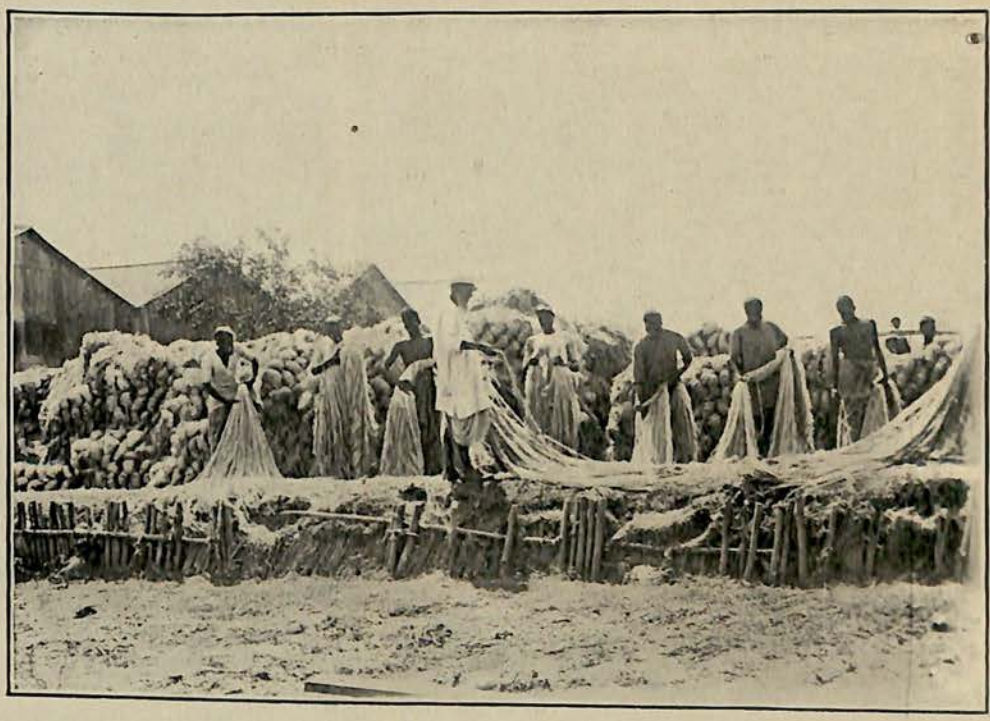
Elections.

145. General elections were held in 25 municipalities, and most of the seats were hotly contested. In the small town of North Barrackpore about 85 per cent. of voters were present at the polling station. While indicating that keen interest is being taken in elections generally, the results may to a certain extent be attributed, especially in Narayanganj, to the activities of the Swarajists for capturing many of the seats. Civil suits were instituted or were pending during the year in connection with elections or by-elections in no less than nine municipalities. The number of such suits and the time taken to dispose of them are strong arguments for the establishment of Special Tribunals with powers of final decision of such election disputes. Provisions for setting up such Tribunals were inserted in the Bengal Municipal Bill of 1925, but as the motion for the introduction of that Bill was rejected by the Legislative Council, nothing could be done to remedy the present state of affairs.

Meetings.

146. Out of 2,354 meetings held during the year, 153 proved abortive for want of a quorum and 199 were adjourned, against 151 and 187, respectively, in the preceding year. The failure was most marked at Kotchandpur, where 13 out of 34 meetings were abortive and the same number had to be adjourned. Sonamukhi also had 10 abortive meetings out of 16. Mr. Cook, the Commissioner, observes in this connection:—

"After reading a good many minutes of meetings, I cannot help having some sympathy with members, as frequently the only items of business are of a routine nature, which might easily be left to the executive."



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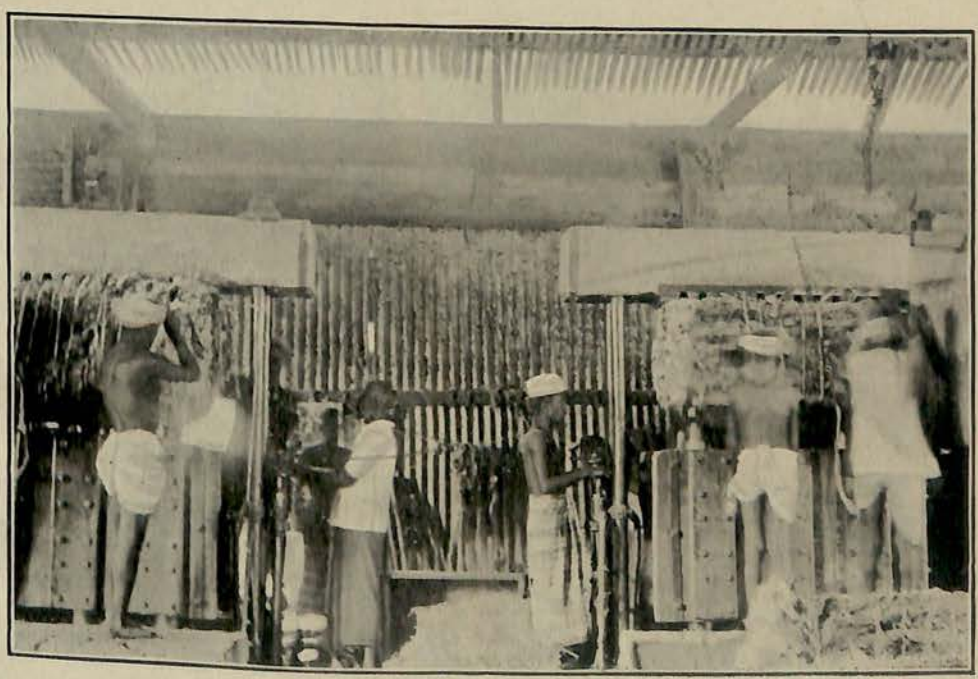

Baling.

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Rajshahi held the largest number of meetings, *viz.*, 53, and was followed by Tollyganj with 48. In the Burdwan Division no less than five municipalities held more than 30 meetings. On the other hand, the Commissioners of North Barrackpore and Ranaghat failed to meet once a month. In the Presidency Division the attendance of Commissioners was on the whole fair, but it was very poor at Barasat.

Number of rate-payers.

147. The total number of rate-payers rose from 317,895 to 321,819. It is reported that owing to the extension in the area of three wards, the population of the Noakhali Municipality has increased from 7,715 to 13,087. The percentage of rate-payers to total population was practically the same as in the preceding year, *viz.*, 15·8. The ratio varied from 40·1 in Sherpur to 3·2 in Titagarh—a mill town with a large coolie population.

Assessment and taxation.

148. The average incidence of taxation per head of population rose from Rs. 3-0-4 to Rs. 3-1-5. It was highest in the hill municipality of Darjeeling (Rs. 10-7-10), and next came Howrah (Rs. 8-11-11), Kurseong (Rs. 8-11-1), Chittagong (Rs. 6-5-2) and Burdwan (Rs. 4-15-0). In five other municipalities, *viz.*, Mymensingh, Narayanganj, Jessore, Berhampore and Hooghly-Chinsura, the ratio was above Rs. 4. In Bajitpur and Debhatta the ratio was as low as 7½ annas, and in 21 municipalities it was from 8 annas to 1 rupee. Generally speaking, the incidence of municipal taxation in the Presidency is extremely low, although it does show a distinct upward tendency, as worked out by the Examiner of Local Accounts.

During the audit of accounts of certain municipalities, it was noticed by the Examiner of Local Accounts that while the tax on private holdings was levied at 5 to 6½ per cent. on their annual value, that on Government holdings was assessed at the maximum rate of 7½ per cent. Such discrimination is as illegal as it is unfair, and steps have been taken to have it discontinued. A general or partial revision of assessment was made in 84 municipalities, the net result being an increase of about Rs. 1½ lakh in the municipal demand of the Presidency as a whole. The largest increase, *viz.*, Rs. 21,530, was obtained in Asansol, but the bulk of this had to be remitted owing to amicable settlement with the East Indian Railway, with regard to the assessment of railway holdings and to the reduction of the scale of latrine fees from 6 to 3¾ per cent. On the other hand, Howrah suffered a loss of Rs. 12,950 in latrine fees, owing to the acquisition of several plots of municipal land by the East Indian Railway and Baraset Rs. 1,760 from a revision of assessment on Government buildings.

Collections.

149. The total collections for the Presidency as a whole increased from Rs. 59 lakhs to more than Rs. 60¼ lakhs, but the percentage of collections on the current demand fell from 95·3 to 94·3. The low percentage in Rajpur (68·6) was due to short collection in the first half-year on account of revision of assessment in the previous year and to delay caused by changes of tax daroga. In 28 municipalities, the collections were equal to or in excess of the current demand, and in 18 they were over 99 per cent. On the other hand, in 8 municipalities the ratio was under 85 per cent., falling as low as 69·1 per cent. in Bally. The poor collection in Bally is reported to be due mainly to party faction and partly to slackness and defective supervision on the part of the municipal executive. As in the previous year, Nalchiti and Garulia collected cent per cent. of the demand without any remission. Titagarh, Champdany and Bhadreswar also collected practically their whole demand, granting less than ½ per cent. remission and leaving no outstanding balance—a result most creditable to the Municipal Commissioners. In these towns, however, the bulk of the taxes is paid by the mills, leaving only a small percentage to be collected in the ordinary way.

Remissions.

150. The amount of remissions for the Province as a whole declined from Rs. 2,86,844 to Rs. 2,28,341 and represented 3·6 per cent. of the current demand. The small municipality of South Dum Dum remitted more than one-fifth of its current demand, Asansol and Sirajganj nearly 15 per cent., while four others, *viz.*, Panihati, Budge Budge, Tollyganj and Jalpaiguri remitted more than 8 per cent. The high percentage of remissions in Asansol (14·7) has been explained above; the large remissions are due, no doubt, to careless and illegal assessment, inefficient collection and reluctance to enforce the summary procedure as provided in the Municipal Act.

Balances.

151. The balances outstanding at the close of the year rose from Rs. 13 lakhs to Rs. 14¾ lakhs, of which Howrah alone was responsible for more than Rs. 5 lakhs. Other municipalities which had unduly large balances outstanding were Dacca, Mymensingh, Bally, Hooghly-Chinsura, Tollyganj, Barisal, Narayanganj, Bankura, Chittagong and Serajganj. Some Municipal Commissioners were themselves the worst defaulters. The Examiner of Local Accounts reported that in Joynagar, Barrackpore, Chittagong, South Dum Dum, North Dum Dum, Satkhira, Netrokona, Mahespore, Rangpore and a few other municipalities, several Commissioners, and in one case the Vice-Chairman himself, did not pay their taxes promptly. The suggestion made by the

Examiner that there should be a provision in the Act that a Municipal Commissioner who does not pay his taxes within the statutory limit would render himself liable to be disqualified, will be considered when the Bengal Municipal Bill is introduced in the Council.

Income and expenditure.

152. The total receipts including opening balance rose from Rs. 1,06,03,381 to Rs. 1,06,64,253. The total disbursements were Rs. 88,72,440, as against Rs. 86,13,713.

Closing balance.

153. The total balance at the close of the year amounted to Rs. 17,91,813, as against Rs. 19,89,668. The largest balances were held by Howrah (Rs. 3,92,335), Darjeeling (Rs. 97,375), Bhatpara (Rs. 78,022), Naihati (Rs. 76,882), Suri (Rs. 52,750) and Dacca (Rs. 51,351). The balance in Darjeeling, it is stated, is due to the difficulty experienced in carrying out certain capital work for want of materials. In Naihati, Bhatpara and Suri the major portion represents funds for the improvement of water-supply and sewerage schemes and in Dacca it includes uncashed cheques for Rs. 30,442 and the Government grant of Rs. 17,193 for the sewerage scheme, leaving a cash balance of Rs. 2,716 only. On the other hand, a number of municipalities failed to keep adequate working balances, and in several instances these were insufficient to meet outstanding liabilities. The worst offenders in this respect were Barasat, Azimganj and Hooghly-Chinsura.

Education.

154. The total amount spent on education, including the Government grant of Rs. 1,14,379, rose from Rs. 2,94,321 to Rs. 3,81,324 and represented 5 per cent. of the municipal income. The expenditure on primary education also showed a corresponding increase of Rs. 63,000, which was contributed by all the Divisions except the Presidency. The increase was most marked in the Darjeeling Municipality, where the expenditure rose from Rs. 10,744 to Rs. 37,249, and is attributed to the liquidation of half the mortgage purchase of the site for the boys' primary school. Seventeen municipalities, however, or roughly one in seven, failed to spend 3·2 per cent. of their ordinary income, the percentage which is taken to represent the amount required for the education of half the number of boys of primary school-going age. On the other hand, the ratio was over 5 per cent. in 60 municipalities and over 10 per cent. in fifteen. More than half the amount spent on education (*viz.*, Rs. 9,205) in Rangpur was derived from the education cess which is levied at the rate of 1·6 per cent. on the municipal valuation. A free primary school of the improved type was established in Kalna, and a sum of Rs. 8,900 was spent by the Asansol Municipality in constructing one of the four primary school buildings according to Mr. Biss's

scheme. In Burdwan a new primary school was opened at Purathan Chak. A recurring grant of Rs. 4,005 was sanctioned by Government for the expansion of free primary education at Berhampore where an education cess at the rate of 1 per cent. is being levied from the beginning of the current year. The Municipal Commissioners of Garulia have also decided to impose an education cess of ½ per cent. to meet half the expenses of primary education according to the Biss scheme. The Madaripur Municipality started two more free primary schools on the Biss model, making a total of seven. Most of these schools are at present located in private houses. The scheme for free primary education in the town of Chittagong was sanctioned by Government provisionally for three years, and 22 schools with 1,149 pupils were established in different centres.

Water-supply.

155. As in the previous year, Tollyganj and South Suburban Municipalities were supplied with filtered water from the Calcutta mains, while seven other municipalities, lying on both sides of the Ganges, got their supply from the local mill filters. Excluding these, there are at present 29 municipalities which have their own water-works. The number of persons supplied with filtered water was over 9¼ lakhs, the total quantity supplied averaging nearly 11 million gallons per day. The Suri water-supply scheme and the scheme for the extension of the Bankura supply were in progress. Experimental borings at Suri showed that tube-wells are impossible as a source of supply, and an infiltration gallery under the river was finally adopted. At Bankura a new engine was erected and set to work, but owing to the reluctance of the Municipal Commissioners to accept steel mains for the distribution system, the extension of the pipe lines could not be taken in hand before the end of the year. The Raniganj water-supply scheme could not be completed for want of funds. An additional grant of Rs. 17,500 and a loan of the same amount from Government, together with the promised contribution of Rs. 15,000 from the Asansol Local Board, will, it is hoped, bring the work to completion. A sketch project for the improvement of water-supply in Asansol has recently been administratively approved by Government. The Berhampore water-works continued to be managed by the Public Health Department, the financial position was greatly improved, and as a result of the various economies effected it was found possible to sanction 20 additional house connections. The Naihati water-supply scheme has been approved, while the Bhatpara and Panihati schemes are maturing. A scheme for the extension of Khulna water-works was sanctioned by Government at an estimated cost of Rs. 58,400. A scheme for the improvement of water-supply at Patuakhali was also sanctioned at a cost of Rs. 66,000 towards which Government made a grant of Rs. 28,000 and a loan

of Rs. 11,000. To check the excess consumption and wastage of filtered water at Mymensingh arrangements were made for the installation of meters at a cost of Rs. 14,700, the major portion of which would be met from deposits made by the rate-payers. The Comilla water-works were completed during the year, while administrative approval was given to the water-works of the Brahmanbaria Municipality at an estimated cost of Rs. 1,09,300, towards which Government will make a contribution of Rs. 29,300 and a loan of Rs. 20,000. Efforts were made to improve the supply of the Ronaldshay water-works at Rajbari. A 2″ diameter tube-well was sunk to a depth of 200 feet at a cost of Rs. 2,500, which was entirely met from private donations. The well has proved most successful, about 10,000 gallons of pure water being distributed daily among a population of 3,000. The experimental boring of a tube-well as a part of the scheme for the supply of water to the northern section of Chandpur was commenced during the year under the supervision of the Public Health Department.

The supply of water by tube-wells having proved successful in certain soils and at the same time cheaper, several municipalities—especially in the Presidency Division—sank tube-wells during the year under report. In Bally three tube-wells were sunk by the East Indian Railway, one by the proprietors of the Victoria Cotton Mills and another by the municipality. They are now supplying excellent water to the whole of the railway settlement and to Ward No. IV of the municipality. With the co-operation of the *Palli Mandali*, a local association, the small municipality of Birnagar sank 6 tube-wells and a *pucca* well, reclaimed two tanks and cleared all the *pucca* wells at a cost of over Rs. 9,000. The sinking of a 5″ diameter tube-well in Kanchrapara was in progress, while negotiations were made by the Halisahar Municipality with the Hukumchand Jute Mills for the supply of tube-well water to the town. The Municipal Commissioners of South Dum Dum also have taken up a scheme for sinking deep tube-wells in different localities where there are no pipes. The boring of a tube-well in English Bazar, for which Government made a grant of Rs. 11,000, was completed during the year, but the question of financing the distributory scheme has not yet been solved. The well has proved successful and yields 8,000 gallons of water per hour.

156. There was an increase of Rs. 1¼ lakhs in the expenditure under this head due to various causes, *e.g.*, construction of new *methars'* sheds, purchase of conservancy tools and implements, increase in the number and pay of the staff and a rise in the price of fodder for live-stock. The conservancy charges were Rs. 4½ lakhs in excess of the receipts from latrine

Conservancy and drainage.

fees, which rose by only Rs. 23,000. There is often great unwillingness to raise the rate of fees so as to make the latrine fund self-supporting, and in consequence deficit balances are only too common. There is great difficulty in obtaining *methars* in the Presidency Division for municipal service. "Indeed, the problem of the conservancy staff," writes Mr. Graham, Magistrate of Nadia, "is a grave one, even in the big municipalities ..... Everywhere there is a shortage of sweepers..... The Commissioners of Krishnagar have made enquiries for sweepers in Behar and in the Central Provinces. They are not obtainable. Furthermore, if the jobs could be filled, there would be a strike everywhere, unless wages were raised 50 per cent. all round. The men are only content because they get double-pay by doubling jobs. The insubordination of these staffs is becoming a great menace to town health." The moral, perhaps, is to depend less on the human factor and to push on with sewerage schemes and the installation of septic tanks.

Out of the total capital expenditure of Rs. 2,60,529 under this head, Dacca alone contributed Rs. 2,15,786, the major portion of which was on account of its sewerage scheme. The initial portion of the Dacca sewerage, to which Government made a total grant of more than Rs. 22 lakhs, was completed and was in full operation during the year. About three-quarters of the total length of sewers of Titagarh were completed. The sewerage scheme of the Bhatpara Municipality was under the consideration of Government. The alterations to the detritus tank and reconstruction of the roof over the septic tanks at Kurseong were completed. Minor drainage works were also carried out in several other towns.

Public Health.

157. As in the previous year, almost all the municipalities took steps to improve sanitation by filling up, clearing or disinfecting insanitary tanks, ditches and *dobas* and by removing undergrowth and obnoxious vegetation. But "unless and until every householder gets the idea into his head" as says Mr. Marr, Commissioner of the Rajshahi Division, "that he should convert the surroundings of his house into a flower, vegetable and fruit garden, there will be no real abatement of the evil of rank vegetation."

Preventive measures were taken by a large number of municipalities to check the spread of epidemics. Medicines and disinfectants were freely distributed, tanks were reserved and special doctors appointed, where necessary. In certain cases the Director of Public Health arranged for a regular supply of lymph and anti-cholera vaccine and also deputed qualified doctors. The

local Health Committee in Serampore co-operated with the municipality to check the spread of cholera. Free vaccination was provided by many municipalities, and effective measures were taken to secure the vaccination and revaccination of children. Malaria and kala-azar were prevalent in some municipalities. It is reported that some anti-malarial and kala-azar societies did useful work in co-operation with municipalities in combating these diseases. Quinine and cinchona febrifuge were freely distributed by many municipalities. A general malarial survey was undertaken in the town of Jalpaiguri. Anti-malarial work on scientific lines was carried out by the Birnagar *Palli Mandali.* In Berhampore a health committee was formed for combating malaria and kala-azar. The three municipal kala-azar centres at Dacca did useful work. North Dum Dum, South Dum Dum and Jamalpur also opened centres for treatment of kala-azar.

Increasing interest was displayed by some municipalities in examining food-stuffs offered for sale to the public. In Dacca, for instance, 329 samples of different kinds of foodstuff were sent up for analysis, of which nearly 52 per cent. was found to be adulterated. Prosecutions under the Bengal Food Adulteration Act were instituted in 151 cases, of which 88 ended in conviction.

Measures were taken by certain municipalities to eradicate water-hyacinth. Notices were issued by Baranagar, South Dum Dum and Rajshahi Municipalities upon the owners of tanks and insanitary pits for the eradication of water-hyacinth, and they were complied with. The two branches of the Nator Raj, who are the owners of large tanks in the town, placed funds at the disposal of the municipality for the purpose of clearing their tanks. In English Bazar water-hyacinth was cleared from two tanks after the owners had been prosecuted. The Bagjola khal was cleared of water-hyacinth by Government. A joint conference of the Municipal and the Eastern Bengal Railway authorities is considering the question of eradicating the pest from the pits and lowlands by the side of railway lines.

158. The total expenditure under the head fell from Rs. 11,39,602 to Rs. 10,87,101, Dacca alone being responsible for Rs. 39,787. The decrease in Dacca is said to have been chiefly due to the fact that about half of the road repair work could not be undertaken on account of financial stringency caused by non-realisation of taxes. The percentage of outlay on public works to the total expenditure varied from 3·4 in Rishra-Konnagar to 61·1 in Debhata. Public Works.

The total length of metalled roads maintained by municipalities was 1,306 miles and that of unmetalled roads 1,565 miles. As is to be expected, the mileage of metalled roads is largest (72) in Howrah, while Krishnagar has the greatest mileage of unmetalled roads (77). The Bengal Motor Vehicles Tax Bill, by which it was proposed to take power for local bodies to levy a reasonable tax on motor vehicles, was, after its introduction in the Council in 1926, referred to a Select Committee. The majority of the Committee were of opinion that a system of Provincial taxation should be introduced instead of that proposed in the Bill. Government accepted this recommendation and decided to undertake a measure authorizing Government to levy a tax on motor vehicles, the income derived therefrom being expended in the form of grants to local bodies to assist them in maintaining or improving communications. The yield of the tax is likely to be small, and unless some other means of increasing the resources at the disposal of local bodies can be found, no general improvement of roads either in rural or in urban areas can be expected.

Loans.

159. Loans amounting to Rs. 1,16,500 were granted from Provincial revenues to eight municipalities, *viz.*, Suri (Rs. 19,000), Krishnagar (Rs. 25,000), Barisal (Rs. 25,000), Patuakhali (Rs. 11,000), Noakhali (Rs. 6,000), Jalpaiguri (Rs. 15,000) and Bajitpur (Rs. 500). The Raniganj Municipality having failed to pay the first two instalments towards the repayment of the loan of Rs. 50,000 granted for water-works, the original loan was converted into a loan of Rs. 58,300. Howrah borrowed a sum of Rs. 1,50,000 for the improvement of water-supply from its own lighting fund, on condition that the latter should be reimbursed in five years. Altogether 43 municipalities were in debt to Government, their total liabilities amounting to nearly Rs. 35 lakhs. The private loan of Rs. 3,000 taken by the Santipur Municipality to pay the conservancy staff, which went on strike for non-payment of wages, was fully repaid. Brahmanbaria also liquidated its loan of Rs. 6,000 in full.

Audit of accounts and embezzlement.

160. The accounts of almost all the municipalities were audited. There is a tendency on the part of local bodies to treat audit with indifference. Under existing orders, audit notes should be returned to the Examiner of Local Accounts within three months of receipt, but in most cases the replies are not received till after the lapse of six months. Apart from delay, replies are often incomplete and inaccurate or evasive, and very little is done to remedy the defects and irregularities pointed out. The suggestion made by the Examiner that prompt and proper disposal of audit notes should constitute an important factor in the consideration of the applications of local bodies for grants, loans

and other financial help from Provincial revenues has the entire approval of Government. Embezzlements or misappropriations of municipal money occurred in Katwa, Hooghly-Chinsura, Bally, Mymensingh, Mahespore and Santipur. Except in Santipur where the cases of misappropriation by the collecting sarkar was under enquiry, the offenders in these cases were dismissed from service and criminally prosecuted. In Bally and Mymensingh the culprits were sentenced to rigorous imprisonment, while in Katwa the tax *daroga*, who was one of the accused, was acquitted by the Sessions Judge. A committee of 3 Commissioners enquired into the case of the tax *daroga* of the Baidyabati Municipality, who was suspected by the auditor of having misappropriated municipal money and of having committed fraud in connection with the cart registration tickets. The committee found that there was no case of misappropriation but only a few irregularities, and the services of the tax *daroga* were dispensed with by the municipality. The matter, however, should have been investigated by the police instead of by a Committee. Generally speaking, there is a great reluctance on the part of the Municipal Commissioners to institute prosecutions against their servants. Government are of opinion that it is not sufficient for the Municipal Commissioners to punish the delinquents by dismissal or to rest satisfied with the recovery of the sums misappropriated. No personal considerations should deter them from placing offenders on trial, as embezzlements are likely to continue and increase if it is known that prosecution is not likely to follow exposure. At the same time, it is most important that the Municipal executive should not, by lack of supervision and neglect of the account rules, place temptation in the way of their servants.

General Remarks. Burdwan Division.

161. "There is a fair amount of vitality in the municipalities in Burdwan district," observes the Commissioner of the Division. "There are the usual defects of inequitable assessment and somewhat dilatory realisation, but work is being done. More work to improve sanitation might well be done in Katwa and Kalna, if the Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen were not so painfully convinced of the difficulties in their way. More initiative is needed, but the fear of interfering with vested interests or of endangering popularity stands in the way as in all municipalities." The improvement of the water-works and construction of more masonry drains are the two principal wants in the Burdwan town. Two new oil engines having been erected, the pressure of water has increased, but as the water mains date from 1884, their capacity is not sufficient to meet the pressure of the new engines. It is apprehended that they may break down from the increased pressure. The condition of the roads in Katwa is as bad as before,

and the arrangement of street lighting is also not satisfactory. The condition of roads, latrines and drains did not show any improvement in the municipalities of the district of Bankura. In Midnapore the best administered municipalities were those of Tamluk and Ghatal, and the smaller municipalities lived their usual proverty-stricken hand-to-mouth existence. The largest and most important municipalities in the district of Hooghly are Hooghly-Chinsura and Serampore. The financial condition of both these municipalities was deplorable, that of Hooghly-Chinsura dangerously approximating to bankruptcy as the outstanding liabilities were Rs. 44,222 and the closing balance Rs. 10,067. The outstanding liabilities of Serampore also amounted to Rs. 22,344, against the closing balance of Rs. 37,545. The supersession of the Hooghly-Chinsura Municipality was contemplated, but Government have decided to give the new Board an opportunity to bring about reforms. The attitude of the Municipal Commissioners in Rishra-Konnagar towards the mill authorities was positively hostile to the great disadvantage of the rate-payers. In Bally there was no improvement in collection, with the result that road repairs and street lighting were badly neglected.

The Commissioner of the Division considers that, in many municipalities which have ceased to satisfy the conditions of section 10 of the Bengal Municipal Act, Union Boards would probably give the residents all the amenities which they can afford. But although the law permits Government to abolish these municipalities where the conditions of section 10 are no longer fulfilled, it does not provide for the immediate substitution of Union Boards. This point will have the Minister's attention when the Village Self-Government Act is amended.

Presidency Division.

162. The main features of municipal administration in the 24-Parganas remained much the same, though there was a tendency towards improvement. The average incidence of taxation per head of population rose from Rs. 1-11-9 to Rs. 1-14-6. Collection also improved, the percentage rising from 92·9 to 97·7, and there was a consequent decrease of the outstanding balances. More money was spent on public health and water-supply. A successful health exhibition was organized at Baranagar. With a loan of Rs. 25,000 from Government the Municipal Commissioners of Krishnagar improved their roads considerably, substituting for stone *jhama*. The water-supply problem of Birnagar was solved by the local *Palli Mandali* in co-operation with the municipality. At Nabadwip a new Board was formed

in 1926, and it is reported that it is taking steps for the general improvement of the town as well as its water-supply. "The administration of Santipur, on the other hand," says the Magistrate of the district, "has only this to be said for it—that the Commissioners struggled through the year without throwing up altogether. At one time the pay of the staff was so much in arrears that the Subdivisional Officer of Ranaghat had to borrow Rs. 3,000 from a rate-payer to put an end to a strike of the conservancy establishment, on the ground of non-payment of wages, and to give the Commissioners an opportunity to carry on." Kushtia continued to have a forward policy and was run in a business like way. Chakdah, Kumarkhali and Meherpur are nothing more than overgrown villages as far as the amenities of the modern town life are concerned. The municipal administration of the district of Murshidabad was fairly managed, and the health of the municipal town was generally good. In Berhampore the *methars'* co-operative society, which was started in 1921, has been a source of great relief to individual members in times of need. The Municipal Employees' Association also is doing useful work. The collection of rates and taxes in Jessore was as disappointing and unsatisfactory as ever. A particularly regrettable feature is that some of the Municipal Commissioners themselves, including the Chairman, were in arrears. To meet its ordinary expenditure, a considerable proportion of the loan taken from Government for improvement of water-supply was improperly diverted. The financial affairs of the Satkhira municipality were in a hopeless condition, owing to bad management by the Municipal Commissioners. The Divisional Commissioner, after inspecting the municipality, directed the formation of a small subcommittee to take the collections in hand and to submit a special weekly progress report.

The Commissioner of the Presidency Division makes the following remarks:—

"The standard of administration of the municipalities continues with a slight tendency towards improvement. The average incidence of taxation per head of population rose from Re. 1-14-2 to Rs. 2-0-6, and there was an advance in the percentage of collection. A few well-managed municipalities in the industrial areas, with generous contributions from the local mills and Government, have been able to undertake schemes of scientific sewerage and water-supply. Many municipalities have improved and increased their water-supply by sinking tube-wells. On the other hand, the outstanding balances in many municipalities were very large. Generally, there was disinclination to take

coercive measures, and the fact that in some municipalities the Commissioners themselves were in arrears is to be regretted."

Dacca Division.

163. On the working of the Dacca Municipality, Mr. Philpot, Magistrate of Dacca, observes as follows: "It is most regrettable that the campaign against the assessment should still continue and that the municipality should now be faced with the prospect of litigation even before the Privy Council. If those who are inclined to criticise the municipality severely for shortcomings which are due to inadequate funds would use their influence to make people realize that it is suicidal for them to support such a campaign, prospects would be brighter.

"The figures for the year under report do not show any very marked improvement in collection of taxes, as the result of the campaign being carried on energetically had only begun to be felt towards the close of the year. The prospects for the present year in this respect are encouraging.

"The Chairman especially is to be congratulated on the firm attitude he has adopted and the personal attention he has been giving in the matter."

The administration of the municipalities of Sherpur, Jamalpur and Tangail showed a general improvement, owing to the exceptional energy and devotion to duties shown by the Chairmen. The municipal administration of Faridpur, Madaripur and Rajbari on the whole advanced appreciably, although there was a certain amount of party faction in all these places. The Municipal Commissioners of Pirojpur seriously tackled their financial position and reduced their outstanding balances. In Barisal, on the other hand, the balance of uncollected taxes rose from Rs. 25,763 to Rs. 28,000, in spite of a lamentably high figure of remission (Rs. 6,339).

Chittagong Division.

164. The Commissioner of the Division makes the following observation:—

"None of the municipalities in this division showed any marked advance during the year. The financial condition of the Chittagong Municipality continues to be bad and has led the Commissioners to seek relief by suggesting the provincialization of one of the principal roads in the town. The Commissioners have not been able to realise fully their heavy arrears.

"In Comilla, the Commissioners concentrated all their energy on the completion of the water-works with the result that their activities in other directions were extremely limited. Their roads and drains are unsatisfactory and require more attention.

"The Noakhali Municipality is in a deplorable condition. Their roads are bad, their drains worse and their water-supply worst of all. It is impossible for them to effect any improvement until they have overhauled the assessment of the entire municipal area.

"The smaller municipalities are doing their best with the small resources at their disposal, but they can do more if they would consent to enhance their taxes which are at present extremely low. Their disinclination in this respect is greater than in the municipalities at the headquarters of the districts."

Rajshahi Division.

165. The administration of the Rajshahi Municipality during the year was at first marred by party strife, but since the election of a new executive this hindrance has been less in evidence. The biggest problems in this municipality are those of water-supply and drainage. The financial condition of the Bogra Municipality is far from satisfactory, and the deficit balance of the general fund has not yet been made up. The financial position of the Pabna Municipality was even worse than it was in the preceding year. The collecting agency in Sirajganj requires more careful supervision, as the outstanding balance has increased from Rs. 16,781 to Rs. 18,266. The working of the municipalities in the Malda district is far from satisfactory. None of the municipalities use the powers entrusted to them or enforce the prompt payment of taxes.

The Commissioner of the Division observes: "Although none of the municipalities can legitimately claim credit for any special advance during the year, I think that on the whole there has been an attempt to improve existing conditions and that most of the municipalities can look back with some satisfaction on the year's work. Even in the Pabna and Malda districts where the municipal administration has been least satisfactory there has, I think, been some effort at improvement. None of the plains municipalities, however, can hope to proceed far on the path of progress, unless they materially increase their income by revision of assessment and by the substitution of the tax on holdings for the tax on persons where that has not been done. A bolder loan policy is also called for to secure, partly at the expense of posterity, permanent improvements such as water-supply and drainage schemes or even electric lights and fans.

"Darjeeling Municipality is conducted efficiently on modern lines, and Kurseong follows in its footsteps as far as its smaller resources allow."

Calcutta Corporation.

[Report on the Administration of the Calcutta Corporation for the year 1924-25.]

Introductory.

166. The report on the administration of the Calcutta Municipality for the year 1925-26 had not been received at the time of going to press. The following review relates to the working of the Corporation for the year 1924-25.

Bengal Act III of 1923.

167. The Calcutta Municipal Act of 1899 under which the Corporation had been working since 1900 was amended by Bengal Act III of 1923, with a view to liberalise its constitution and bring it into harmony with the spirit of the Reforms. The new Act came into force in April, 1924. The municipalities of Cossipore-Chitpore, Manicktolla and Garden Reach were added to Calcutta, thus increasing its area from 18¾ square miles to 30½ square miles and its population from 907,851 to 1,077,264. The whole area was divided into 32 wards. The number of Municipal Commissioners, now called Councillors, was raised from 80 to 90. Of these 63 are elected, 10 nominated by Government and 12 returned by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, the Calcutta Trades Association and the Port Commissioners. Fifteen of the elected seats are reserved for Muhammadans, who will be returned by Muhammadans exclusively at the first three elections and by mixed electorates thereafter, of Commerce, the Calcutta Trades Association and the Port Commissioners. The remaining 5, called Aldermen, are elected by the 85 Councillors after each general election. The executive head of the Corporation is elected, subject to confirmation by Government. The offices of the President of the Corporation, designated Mayor under the new Act, as well as the Deputy Mayor are also open to election. The system of three co-ordinate authorities, created by the Act of 1899, was thus abolished, and the control of the Local Government relaxed to a large extent.

General election.

168. The first general election under the new Act was held in March, 1924. The total number of electors was 70,523. There were contests only in 9 out of the 32 non-Muhammadan constituencies and 2 out of the 7 Muhammadan constituencies, and the votes cast were 49·6 per cent. of the total voting strength of the contested wards. The present Corporation consists of 53 Hindus, 18 Muhammadans, 16 Europeans and Anglo-Indians, 1 Indian Christian and 2 Jews.

Finances.

169. The Revenue Account of the Corporation opened with a balance of Rs. 41,09,477. The receipts during the year amounted to Rs 1,96,25,359, and the payments to Rs. 1,80,17,137, the former including a sum of Rs. 4,88,000, being the transferred closing balances of the added municipalities. On the basis of assets and liabilities, the income amounted to Rs. 2,07,47,650 and the expenditure to Rs. 1,81,93,873, and on the basis of actual receipts and payments there was a balance of Rs. 57,17,698, of which Rs. 40,06,942 was in cash. The Corporation raised a 6½ per cent. Debenture Loan of Rs. 5,54,500 for 22 years in connection with the repayment of the loan of 1899-1900, which fell due on 1st November, 1924, and another 6½ per cent. Debenture Loan of Rs. 34,45,500 for 30 years for the water-supply extension scheme. The total indebtedness of the Corporation at the end of the year stood at Rs. 6,42,28,989 *plus* Rs. 74,59,792 of the Sterling Debenture Loan of £500,000, against which there was an accumulation of Rs. 1,12,23,653 in the Sinking Funds and Reserve Fund taking the securities, which are all Municipal Debentures, at the market value. The total annual liability for interest, contributions to the Sinking Funds and instalments towards repayment of Government loans taken by the amalgamated municipalities amounted to Rs. 52,06,790 at the end of the year.

Assessment Department.

170. As the result mainly of the general revision of assessments, there was an increase of Rs. 41,70,098 in the assessed valuation of the city which stood at Rs. 8,18,05,641, at the end of the year.

Surveyor's Department.

171. The Department prepared plans and estimates for 172 projects estimated to cost Rs. 217 lakhs and acquired 36 bighas of land at a cost of Rs. 3,73,000.

Collection Department.

172. The total gross demand on account of the consolidated rate was Rs. 1,52,72,055, of which Rs. 1,40,83,110 was collected and Rs. 7,04,907 cancelled for vacancy, Rs. 54,469 transferred to the Law Department for recovery by suit, Rs. 2,48,797 returned to the Assessor for enquiry and amendment if necessary, and Rs. 2,031 cancelled as irrecoverable. The percentage of collection on the net current demand declined from 99·4 to 98·74. The decrease was due to the large number of fresh and supplementary bills which had to be issued during the last two quarters, many of which could not be realised before the close of the year.

License Department.

173. The total collections on account of license taxes amounted to Rs. 18,66,754, of which about 70 per cent. was on account of tax on trades and professions, Rs. 3,43,710 on carriages and

animals, and Rs. 1,76,662 on the registration of carts. The tax on dogs, which has been recently introduced under the new Act, brought in only Rs. 3,055. The total number of licenses of all kinds issued during the year was 77,319, and the total collection under the Licensed Warehouse and Fire Brigade Act amounted to Rs. 1,51,976.

Lighting Department.

174. There were 16,538 gas lamps in the city at the end of the year, besides a small number of oil and electric lamps. Proposals for the installation of 981 additional gas lamps in the city and also 360 electric lights in Manicktolla and Garden Reach were sanctioned during the year.

Water-supply.

175. The total daily quantity of filtered water supplied to the city was the same as in the previous year, *viz.*, 36¾ million gallons, but there was an increase of nearly 5 million gallons in the supply of unfiltered water which amounted to slightly over 36½ million gallons per day. The supply per head per day was 34 gallons of filtered water and 40·6 gallons of unfiltered water. Pending completion of the Water-supply Extension Scheme, the Corporation have sanctioned the installation of a new engine at Pulta, and also temporary connections to the new filter beds which have recently been constructed in connection with the Extension Scheme. These improvements are likely to provide an additional supply of 6 million gallons per day. Arrangements were also made to supply filtered water in Garden Reach and in portions of Manicktolla by means of water-carts and motor-lorries and a scheme was sanctioned for the sinking of 6 tube-wells in selected areas. The total expenditure incurred up to the end of the year in connection with the Water-supply Extension Scheme amounted to Rs. 43,79,000. Good progress was made in the construction of the underground reservoir at Talla; about 3 miles of trunk mains were laid and the electrification of the pumping stations at Mullick Ghat and Watgunge was practically completed.

Drainage.

176. A Special Committee which was appointed by the Corporation to enquire into the drainage problem of the city did not approve of the proposed scheme for the construction of a spill reservoir for the resuscitation of the Bidyadhari River. A Conference of Engineers, convened at the instance of the Improvement Trust, has made certain recommendations in regard to the general direction of the main outfall and has also suggested various works which might be undertaken to relieve the present pressure on the existing drainage system of the city. The Corporation have deferred consideration of the report, pending the preparation of a rough estimate of the total cost of the various measures recommended. Two Babcock and Wilcox boilers have

been removed from the Watgunge Pumping Station and re-erected at Palmer's Bridge where the entire pumping machinery has been completely overhauled. In order to prevent the back flow of water from the Storm Water Head Cut, it has been decided to erect a large penstock at the junction of the intercepting sewer and the Storm Water Head Cut. The construction of a storm water sewer in Diamond Harbour Road has been completed, and small sections of sewers which collapsed in various parts of the city have been repaired.

Bustee Department.

177. The action taken by the Bustee Department resulted in the clearance of 19 bighas of lands from huts, in the construction of about 1¼ mile of bustee roads, 68 connected privies and 2 bathing platforms. Thirty-eight private streets were also improved and alignments were laid out to regulate the construction of huts over an area of nearly 4,000 bighas.

Conservancy.

178. The daily average quantity of refuse dealt with was 1,272 tons and the total expenditure on street cleansing, the incinerator and the Municipal Railway amounted to Rs. 19,16,009. The scheme for the construction of a refuse platform at Chingrihatta is still under consideration.

Building Department.

179. The total number of applications received for sanction was substantially less than in the previous year, when a very large number were submitted with a view to have the benefit of the provisions of the old Act. Sanction was given to 27 per cent. of the plans received in the case of masonry buildings and 42 in the case of huts. One thousand one hundred and eighty-six notices were issued in respect of insecure buildings, and 1,047 cases of unauthorised construction were sent up to the Magistrate for orders of demolition.

Public Health.

180. Excluding the added areas, the birth rate for the city of Calcutta for the year was 19·0 per thousand, as against 20·1 in the previous year, and the death rate per mille 29·4, against 28·5. The mortality from plague in 1924 was the lowest yet recorded. There was a further ominous rise in the mortality from kala-azar. A severe epidemic of small-pox broke out towards the end of the year, which lasted till the middle of June 1925. Deaths amongst infants numbered 5,076, giving a rate of 294 per thousand registered births, which is the same as the previous year.

The Lady Health Visitors and Midwives employed by the Corporation continued to do good work. The Midwives delivered 4,380 cases and removed 56 difficult and complicated cases to

hospitals. Excluding still-births, the rate of infantile mortality amongst cases attended by the Midwives during the first 10 days was 22·8 per thousand, against the general rate during the first week of 95·2 per thousand. There were only 9 deaths among the women attended by the Corporation staff. A fully equipped Maternity Home in the northern end of the city was opened by the Countess of Lytton on the 16th of February, 1924. The working of the Home actually started from March, 1924, and during this year 417 patients were admitted. The rapid success of this Maternity Home has led to the starting of another such institution in the south end of the city.

Food Inspection.

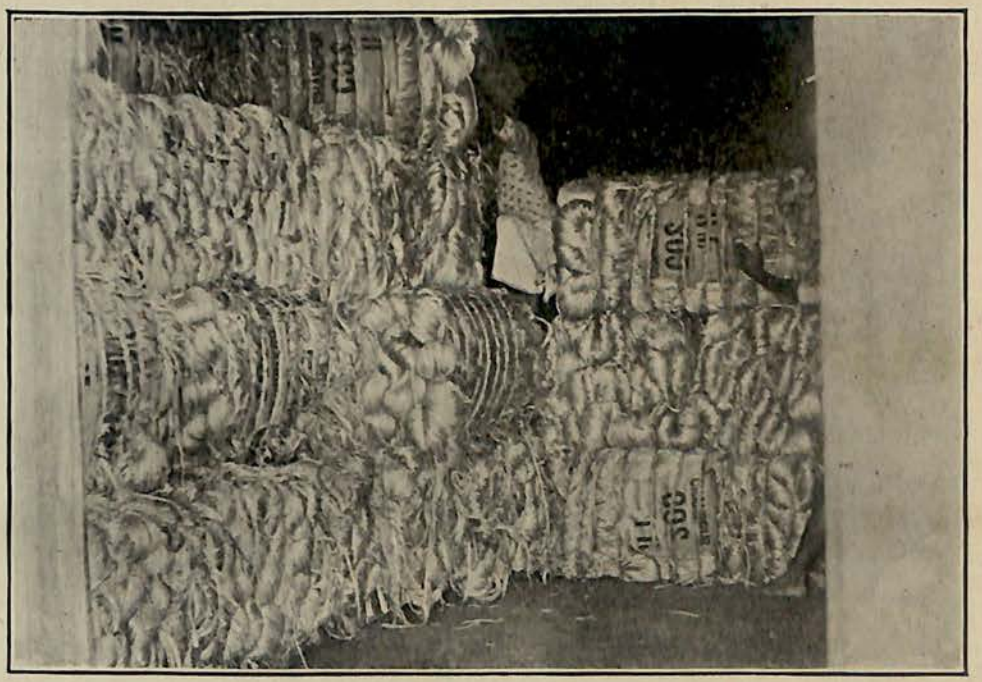
181. The total number of samples of foodstuffs of all kinds analysed was 5,159 of which 775 were found adulterated, 368 out of 1,016 samples of milk, 93 out of 1,123 samples of *ghee*, 52 out of 880 samples of mustard oil, 9 out of 30 samples of arrowroot and 27 out of 38 samples of sago. The total number of prosecutions instituted was 2,045 and fines amounting to Rs. 28,869 were imposed. About 2,750 maunds of unwholesome foodstuffs were destroyed during the year.

Municipal Markets.

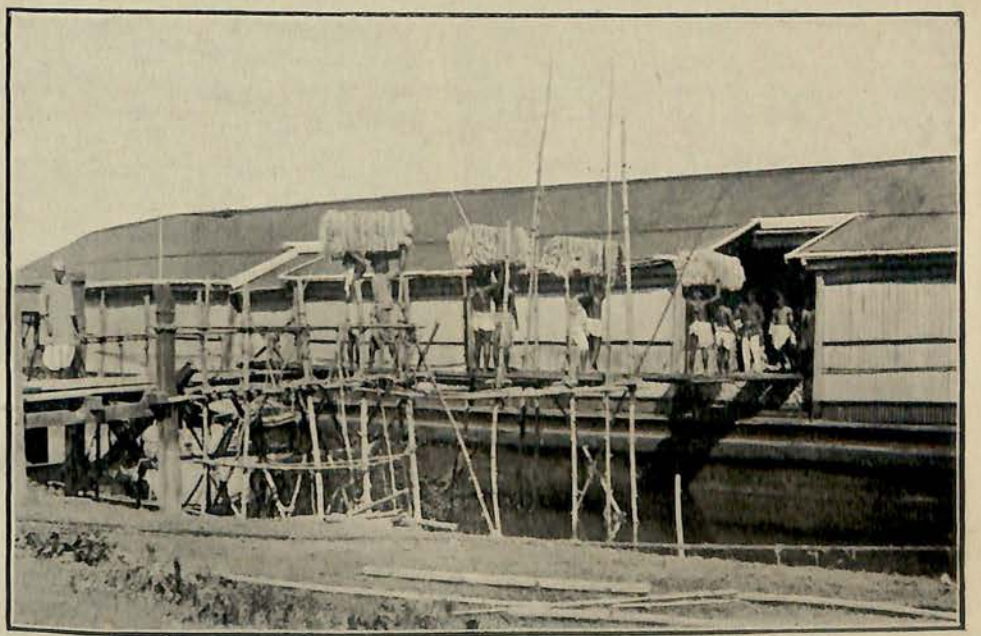
182. The total revenue from the five markets amounted to Rs. 10,19,391, against Rs. 10,61,061 in the preceding year. There was a falling off in the revenue from the Sir Stuart Hogg Market by nearly Rs. 78,000, owing mainly to the clearing of certain sites for the purpose of extensions. A new block of buildings and a *chandney* were completed in connection with this extension. The construction of a new range of shops in the College Street Market was finished, while in the Entally Market it was taken in hand.

Primary Education.

183. The new Municipal Act imposes on the Corporation an obligation to spend not less than a lakh of rupees annually for promoting primary education among boys between the ages of 6 and 12 years and girls between the ages of 6 and 10. A Special Committee which was appointed to prepare a comprehensive scheme recommended that during the next five years at least one model school in each of the 32 wards of Calcutta, one school in each ward capable of accommodating about 200 pupils, one school in a hired building, 48 bustee schools each teaching two batches of students daily and one Training College for teachers capable of accommodating 100 students should be started. The recommendations were accepted by the Corporation and, by the end of 1924-25, 50 free primary schools of different types were established in the city. The actual expenditure incurred in 1924-25 for educational purposes of all kinds amounted to Rs. 1,98,375.



Jute bales in Society's Godown.



Shipping Jute Bales on Flat for transport to Calcutta.

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Calcutta Improvement Trust.

[Report on the Operations of the Calcutta Improvement Trust, 1925-26.]

184. One improvement scheme was sanctioned during the year while a number of such schemes, including the one for the improvement of the Maydapati area in Burrabazar, was published for public criticism. Six improvement schemes were completed. The chief of these was the continuation of the great north and south thoroughfare (Central Avenue) to Chowringhee. Linked up with this important scheme is the widening of Bentinck Street, which obtains access to Central Avenue through the widened Sooterkin's Lane. Bentinck Street for many years has undergone very little change, but the improvement scheme is likely within a short time to transform completely the character of this neighbourhood. The Improvement Trust has also pressed on with its big scheme for linking up Chetla with the Ballygunge railway station, and an insanitary and thinly-populated area is being laid out as a suburb, which before long may rival the improved portion of Bhowanipore.

Other notable schemes executed or in progress were the following, *viz.*—

(*1*) the widening of Park Street, the necessity of which has grown more apparent as the street has been steadily transformed from a residential locality into a shopping thoroughfare;

(*2*) the continuation of the Diamond Harbour Road widening, which has added enormously to the amenities of a particularly squalid neighbourhood and has extended the traffic facilities for which the new Kidderpore Bridge provided;

(*3*) Chitpore Spur: the first instalment of a fine diagonal, linking up Central Avenue with the proposed Howrah Bridge Approach Road and thus with Old Court House Street;

(*4*) Manicktolla Spur: a main road 84 feet in width and about three-quarters of a mile in length, leading from the Central Avenue to Upper Circular Road. This scheme has practically been completed, and when the Manicktolla Bridge now under construction is ready and Manicktolla Road is widened as proposed by the Trust, the spur will furnish an adequate link between Manicktolla and the central area of Calcutta.

Considerable progress was also made with the execution of the Park Street and Theatre Road Extension Scheme, and what was formerly a squalid undrained bustee area has now been laid out on a proper plan, with an adequate system of roads, while the needs of the future have been provided for by means of a large

open space. The improvement of Burrabazar presents problems which the Trust has not yet been able to solve. A scheme was sanctioned by Government in 1922 for the improvement of a small part of the area measuring roughly 10 acres, but the issue of the land acquisition notification has been withheld pending the selection of a site for the new Howrah Bridge. The net cost of the scheme was estimated at Rs. 30 lakhs, and as the area of Burrabazar comprises roughly 100 acres, improvement of the whole on a similar scale might cost anything between Rs. 2 and 3 crores. Nor do the difficulties end with the provision of this large amount, since a very much larger sum must be invested in the purchase of lands from which recoupment might only slowly be obtained. Under these circumstances, the Trust was compelled to revise its programme and to defer the execution of this project. It may be, as the Trust has been advised, that improvement schemes in Burrabazar can be executed at a comparatively small net cost, but the initial expenditure must be so heavy that the Improvement Trust at present cannot contemplate the execution of a series of ordinary improvement schemes in this locality such as it has carried out with great success in other parts of Calcutta. Indeed, the trustees have been forced to the conclusion that their operations in Burrabazar must be limited to the provision of some main arterial roads, and that even so, some modifications in the law of betterment may be necessary.

Sewer roads.

185. Apart from its street scheme, the Trust has been active in its use of section 63 of the Calcutta Improvement Act and has aligned a number of proposed roads during the year with a view to construct main sewer roads for the drainage of Manicktolla.

Rehousing schemes.

186. The position of the rehousing schemes was practically the same as in the previous year. Of the 96 small sites on the Paikpara Road provided for those who have been displaced by the operations of the Trust only eight plots of land were disposed of during the year.

Open spaces.

187. The acquisition of the Cossipore-Chitpore Park with an area of 225 bighas cost the Trust over Rs. 50 lakhs. Levelling, filling-up and planting are still in progress. It will ultimately be the maidan of Northern Calcutta. The Ratan Sarkar Garden Street playground in the very heart of Burrabazar has proved the value of the smallest open space in a congested area. The Amherst Street Park is under construction, St. James' Square has been completed, and the Kalighat Tramways Depot Square is almost ready for transfer to the Corporation. The Shambazar Park was handed over to the Corporation.

Finance.

188. The Board's income derived from the terminal tax (Rs. 2,20,152) shows a small increase of Rs. 6,600, but the duty

levied on jute rose from Rs. 10,91,317 to Rs. 11,16,675. The duty on transfer of property amounted to Rs. 4,74,522, as compared with Rs. 5,13,151 in the previous year. The decrease is ascribed to the depression of land values. The Corporation contribution has already grown to Rs. 16 lakhs. Temporary lettings of undemolished holdings yielded an income of Rs. 2¾ lakhs, and more than Rs. 3 lakhs and about Rs. 21 lakhs were realised, respectively, from exemption fees and sale of lands and buildings. A sum of Rs. 15 lakhs was spent on engineering works. The total income and expenditure under the Capital Account were about Rs. 74 lakhs and Rs. 64½ lakhs, respectively, and those under the Revenue Account Rs. 45⅔ lakhs and about Rs. 26 lakhs. Experience has shown that the income of the Trust is not really adequate for its gigantic task, but it is not likely to obtain new sources of revenue. Large inroads have already been made on its borrowing capacity, and there is danger, as the Board itself realizes, in capitalizing its remaining free surplus of income over expenditure, which amounts to about Rs. 13 lakhs. After meeting loan charges and other recurring expenditure on establishment, rent, taxes, etc., the Board has an annual surplus which is available for capital works. If the life of the Board is prolonged, the total amount thus available over a long series of years, say 40, will evidently be a much larger sum than the Trust could obtain by devoting the whole of that surplus to the service of a loan maturing at the end of that period. The immediate capitalization of its remaining annual surplus by means of a loan with a thirty years' currency would yield under two crores of rupees—a quite insufficient sum for the work which has still to be done.

District Boards.

[The Reports of the Commissioners of Divisions on the working of District Boards in Bengal during the year 1925-26.]

District Boards.

189. The total number of members during the year remained the same as in the previous year, *viz.*, 676, and the percentage of elected members was 58·1. The number of meetings held was 429, of which 10, as against none in the previous year, proved abortive for want of a quorum. With the exception of Tippera, Darjeeling and Hooghly, all the District Boards met at least once a month and, on the whole, the work of the meetings was done expeditiously.

Local Boards.

190 As in the previous year the number of Local Boards was 82, which were presided over by 76 non-official and 6 official Chairmen. They held 893 meetings, against 889 in the previous year; 22 proved abortive for want of a quorum. Local Boards

do not, generally speaking, serve any useful purpose in the hierarchy of rural self-governing bodies that are at present in existence. This is mainly due to the fact that few of these Boards have important duties and responsibilities delegated to them under section 101, Local Self-Government Act, and the income which they handle is extremely small. Their future is under consideration of Government. Where the whole of a particular area is covered by Union Boards, it seems desirable to abolish the Local Board in its present form, and to replace it by bodies which deal with a smaller tract of country than a subdivision, *i.e.*, a circle or thana, if any authority intermediate between a District Board and Union Board is considered necessary at all.

Village Self-Government.

191. A noteworthy feature of the year was the creation of many new Union Boards, especially in the Mymensingh, Nadia and Chittagong districts. The total number of the Boards which worked during the year was 2,217, against nearly 1,500 in the previous year. In some places the establishment of Union Boards had to be postponed on account of local opposition. Union Boards are still associated in many peoples' minds with the idea of increased taxation, and care has to be taken to explain the provisions of the Village Self-Government Act, before their introduction is attempted in any particular area. Circle Officers accordingly continued their propaganda work, many of them with much tact and patience. At the same time, revision of the size and number of Unions and of the personnel of panchayets was carried on with a view to producing conditions favourable to the establishment of Union Boards. The amount realised by way of union rate and rents of chaukidari chakran lands, a total sum of Rs. 30 lakhs of which Rs. 25 lakhs was spent on establishment and collection charges, leaving a balance of Rs. 5 lakhs only for communications, medical aid, education, water-supply and sanitation, compared with Rs. 4 lakhs in the previous year. The increase was due to the greater number of Union Boards that were working, rather than to any increase of taxation. Useful work was generally done by them within the limits of their income, and the ground was made ready for further development. Specific mention may be made of the Panchra Union Board in the district of Burdwan which cut a feeder drain for supplying good drinking water to the people, and thereby helped the villagers greatly to increase the yield of their crops; of the Dashghara Union Board in Hooghly which sank as many as 9 tube-wells; of the Dhula-Simla Union in Howrah which re-excavated the khal of that place at a cost of Rs. 3,000 and of the Sitakund Union Board in Chittagong which introduced road lighting and a conservancy system on a moderate scale. Generally

speaking, the chaukidars and dafadars were more regularly paid; groups of Union Boards in some places combined to assist dispensaries, and many Boards contributed to anti-malarial work. Service of processes by dafadars and chaukidars was satisfactory. The Union Benches and Union Courts are reported to have done good work, and there are indications of their growing popularity.

Party feeling and petty animosities among Union Board members detract much from the success of these institutions, but the spirit of self-help is alive and working, and it is hoped that it will gradually overcome these evil tendencies. What retards progress more than anything else is the fear of unpopularity among the members, which can only disappear with the growth of the civic sense. The attitude of District and Local Boards towards Union Boards was generally sympathetic, but not always enlightened. For the encouragement and development of village self-government it is desirable that duties and works should be transferred to Union Boards as largely as possible under section 33, Village Self-Government Act, and that a judicious grant-in-aid policy should be followed, giving help according to deserts as well as needs.

Finance of District Boards.

192. The receipts amounted to Rs. 135·3 lakhs, against Rs. 133 lakhs in 1924-25, the increase being mainly due to larger receipts under "Education", "Civil Works", "Miscellaneous" and "Railways". Receipts under "Medical" declined. The disbursements rose from Rs. 131 lakhs to Rs. 137 lakhs. The increase was chiefly due to increased expenditure under "Medical", "Miscellaneous", "Education" and "Civil Works". The closing balance totalled Rs. 37·1 lakhs (of which Rs. 21·7 lakhs were in cash), against Rs. 37·6 lakhs in 1924-25.

Taxation.

193. The average incidence of taxation throughout the Presidency was, as in the previous year, 2 annas 9 pies a head per annum, varying in different districts from 1 anna 7 pies to 8 annas 11 pies.

Education.

194. The expenditure rose by Rs. 57,000 to Rs. 30·4 lakhs, of which Government contributed Rs. 18 lakhs, while contributions from other sources, school fees and miscellaneous receipts amounted to Rs. ·4 lakhs, Rs. ·4 lakhs and Rs. ·35 lakhs, respectively. District Boards from their own funds contributed Rs. 11·25 lakhs, against Rs. 12·4 lakhs in the previous year. The number of upper and lower primary schools maintained and aided by District Boards rose from 41,490 to 41,998, of which 31,493 were boys' schools and 10,505 girls' schools. The number of girls' schools and the number of pupils attending them increased by 765 and 17,857, respectively. Union Boards continued to maintain the free primary schools started by them in previous

years on the lines suggested by Mr. Biss, and new schools of this type were started during the year at Sat Bankura Union in Midnapore and at Narainpur in the 24-Parganas. The District Board of Faridpur undertook to introduce a progressive scheme for free primary schools in Gopalganj, Ghagore, Palong and Kabirajpur Union Board areas, and the 24-Parganas District Board sanctioned the establishment of 22 similar schools. An experiment was made in Narenda Union in Midnapore with primary education on the lines of the Biss scheme with four schools, while the Khulna District Board sanctioned the introduction of primary education on these lines in the Aichganti Union. The District Board of Hooghly resolved to entrust the supervision of aided primary schools to the Union Boards concerned. There were new Santhal Education Boards in Bankura and Midnapore with the District Magistrates as their Presidents, for the education of Santhals. In Birbhum and Hooghly there were, respectively, 105 and 31 night schools for the education of labouring classes, with 2,065 and 561 pupils on their rolls. Technical and industrial education continued to receive special attention. The peripatetic weaving school at Suri was provincialised, and a new peripatetic centre at Sultanpur in the same district was also sanctioned for the instruction of aboriginal tribes like the Santhals. The 24-Parganas District Board sanctioned a scheme for the establishment of a junior technical school in the district at an approximate capital cost of Rs. 50,000 and an annual grant of Rs. 14,000, but subsequently agreed to amalgamate it with the Divisional Commissioner's scheme for an industrial and agricultural school at Jadabpur near Calcutta. The proposed technical school at Krishnagar referred to in the last year's resolution was not started, pending the acquisition of a suitable site for the school.

Medical Relief and Public Health.

195. The expenditure under these heads aggregated Rs. 20 lakhs, against Rs. 18 lakhs of the previous year. The increase was noticeable in most of the districts, and was most marked in the 24-Parganas. Twenty-two new dispensaries were opened during the year, and the total number of dispensaries maintained and aided were 485 and 319, respectively. Medical relief was, as usual, provided primarily through these institutions and also through a small number of Homeopathic, Kaviraji and Hakimi dispensaries maintained or subsidised by District Boards. Arrangements were also made to provide medical relief during epidemics of cholera, small-pox and other infectious diseases by engaging temporary itinerent doctors who distributed medicines free, treated cases, disinfected wells and took other preventive measures. Dispensaries were also maintained by some Union Boards. Health and anti-malarial societies were formed in

several districts. In some places a few societies bound themselves together to maintain a medical practitioner, and some societies distributed quinine and other medicines free to indigent patients. These bodies are working on the right lines and deserve all possible encouragement and help.

Special arrangements were made by District Boards for the treatment and the prevention of kala-azar. As in the previous years, all the District Board dispensaries were made centres of treatment with requisite medicines and instruments. Most of the doctors in charge of these dispensaries were previously trained in the latest methods of diagnosis and treatment. A number of out-centres were opened by District Boards as also by private enterprise, where excellent work was done. The efforts made by the 24-Parganas District Board in this direction also deserve special mention. The scheme adopted by this Board to which reference was made in the previous report is said to have brought relief to many sufferers and, with further development, it is expected to bring about a material reduction in the death and sickness rate of the district.

All Boards did not, however, follow a consistent policy in respect of the permanent dispensaries which they maintain or assist. Such institutions should be spread evenly over a district, so that no one in need of medical aid will have far to travel in order to obtain it. In compliance with a resolution passed by the Legislative Council, Government offer special grants to District Boards to help them in establishing dispensaries at all thana headquarters. Many new dispensaries have been opened in response to this offer but the distribution of medical aid still appears to be uneven. It is reported that in Mymensingh, for instance, thirteen thanas are still without dispensaries at their headquarters. Liberally minded persons sometimes offer baits in the shape of lump donations to induce District Boards to establish new dispensaries in places which may be comparatively near to existing institutions. If these contributions are accepted, District Boards have to find the recurring cost of upkeep, and this can only be done by curtailing expenditure on other necessary objects, such as the opening of dispensaries where they are most needed. There is a danger, too, that funds required for the proper maintenance of existing dispensaries may be cut down in order to provide for the new institutions. Such donations should ordinarily not be accepted, unless an endowment fund sufficient for upkeep of the proposed dispensary can be created, the initial cost being met by the District Board, if necessary from a loan or from balances.

Veterinary.

196. The charges under this head fell from Rs. 1,81,000 to Rs. 1,65,000, the decrease being shared by most of the District Boards, notably by Rangpur, Burdwan, Jalpaiguri and Nadia. In Bankura, where there was an abnormal increase in the number of rinderpest cases, the expenditure fell below that of the previous year. The expenditure rose appreciably in Noakhali and Dinajpur. Cattle disease broke out in many districts, and, though effective provision for inoculation could not be made, the majority of the District Boards concerned took preventive measures as far as their funds permitted, sometimes with the help of the Union Boards concerned. The veterinary assistants maintained by District Boards attended these outbreaks promptly and in most cases succeeded in preventing the spread of the disease. They also made regular tours and did their best to educate the people in the matter of treatment and prevention of cattle disease. It is satisfactory to note that the public are gradually appreciating the utility of the preventive treatment.

Civil Works.

197. The total expenditure under this head, which includes the sums spent on water-supply and drainage, rose by Rs. 43,000 to Rs. 63·1 lakhs. The expenditure on "Buildings" and "Establishment" increased by Rs. 63,000 and Rs. 28,000, while there was a decrease of Rs. 30,000 and Rs. 80,000, respectively, on "Communications" and "Water-supply". The outlay on "Original Works" under "Communications" showed a decline of Rs. 96,652, while the cost of repairs rose by Rs. 66,625, a fact which shows that in the year under review more attention was paid to the maintenance of existing communications than to new construction. This is certainly the wisest policy to adopt, in view of the hopeless inadequacy of the income of District Boards and the many other calls on their resources. Mention was made in the previous report of a Bill for authorising local bodies to levy a reasonable fee on motor traffic, which was then under consideration of Government. It has since been decided not to proceed with this measure, but to substitute for it a Bill authorising Government to levy a tax on motor vehicles, the income derived therefrom being expended in the form of grants to local bodies to assist them in maintaining or improving communications. The yield of the tax is likely to be small, and unless some other means of increasing the resources at the disposal of District Boards can be found, no general improvement of mufassal roads can be expected.

The percentage of lapses over the budget allotment was the highest in the Burdwan district, *viz.*, 23·2, against 11·8 in the previous year. They were partly due to the non-settlement of

contractors' claims within the year and the refusal of the contractors to do further work, and partly to the delay in obtaining sanction to revised rates from the Superintending Engineer and in acquiring land for certain inspection bungalows in the Asansol subdivision. There were also large lapses in Faridpur (18·3) and Pabna (16·2). The lapses in the 24-Parganas declined from 24·0 to 10·5 and those in the Darjeeling and Birbhum districts from 23·4 and 19·8 to 8·1 and 11·4 respectively. As in the preceding year, no part of the allotment lapsed in Malda.

198. The expenditure under this head declined from Rs. 9·9 lakhs to Rs. 9·1 lakhs, being the net result of decreases in 14 districts and increases in 12. Several District Boards, of which Midnapore, Hooghly and Howrah deserve special mention, spent on water-supply more than what they received as augmentation grant, while the District Boards of Chittagong and Darjeeling spent merely a fourth part, and the Noakhali District Board a seventh part of the grants received by them. The Jalpaiguri and Burdwan District Boards spent less than one-half of their expenditure during the previous year. The expenditure in Howrah, Midnapore and Hooghly represented, respectively, 55·0, 42·8 and 40·3 per cent. of the Public Works cess receipts, while that in Jalpaiguri was only 24·9 per cent., against 51·6 per cent. of the previous year. The large expenditure in Midnapore is explained by the fact that the Local Boards at Sadar, Ghatal and Jhargram overspent their respective allotments. The irregularity is especially to be deprecated, in view of the report received that some of the money went astray. There was a great demand for tube-wells in the Hooghly and Howrah districts. In the former 80 new tube-wells were sunk and in the latter some deep-seated wells were constructed on the recommendation of Union Boards. In the 24-Parganas 168 tube-wells, 12 ring wells and 4 masonry wells were sunk, and the excavation of 8 tanks was completed, and many tube-wells were under construction. The District Board also sanctioned a loan of Rs. 3,000 to a private person for the excavation of a tank at Sarupkati in thana Hasnabad, on condition that the tank would be allowed to be used by the public for drinking purposes. The Khulna District Board, besides excavating and sinking tanks and masonry and ring wells, gave out loans amounting to Rs. 3,800 to eight private persons for re-excavation of their old tanks. In Dacca the construction of 24 wells and the excavation of 2 tanks was completed and 62 wells and 4 tanks were undertaken. In Mymensingh much was done during the year to improve water-supply and 154 tube-wells were sunk. The District Board also took up 228 masonry wells, 154 tube-wells, 126 ferro-concrete wells, 14 tanks, 1 tiled well, 3 ring wells and 4 wooden wells and advanced Rs. 5,900 as loans to Water-supply.

private individuals for excavation and re-excavation of tanks. The Rajshahi District Board sank 50 masonry wells, 30 ring wells and 1 tube-well and granted loans for re-excavation of tanks. In Bogra 47 tube-wells and 14 masonry wells were completed during the year.

"In this connection," says Mr. Twynam, Magistrate of Mymensingh, "I would strongly urge that an approved pattern of tube-well be adopted by the Local Self-Government Department after exhaustive tests, and that simplicity and strength should be qualities demanded. It is comparatively unimportant whether a tube-well costs Rs. 700 or Rs. 800, but it is of very great importance that it should be nearly as unbreakable as the parish pump in England. I believe that the several companies concerned would readily come up to the mark if Government laid down certain standards. I would also recommend that—

"(*a*) no tube-well should be considered complete without a stock of spare parts, and

"(*b*) the Local Self-Government Department should issue a pamphlet in Bengali explaining the mechanism of a tube-well and how to effect repairs.

"There can be no question that the tube-well is the most appropriate and hygienic source of water-supply in the mufassal. It labours under one disadvantage only—it is constantly going out of order, in many cases its period of usefulness is not over 6 months. It is surely possible to devise some means of preventing this disadvantage. The Mymensingh District Board's action in appointing a *mistri* to attend to repairs is a good beginning, but it does not go far enough. Many *mistris* will be required and much time will be wasted if reliance must be placed on their activities only."

The 24-Parganas District Board, it may be noticed, maintained a staff consisting of one tube-well inspector, one mechanic and five *mistris* to look after the tube-wells, about 500 in number, scattered all over the district. The Minister considers that while normally the bulk of the cost of new sources of water-supply should be found by the individuals benefited, the employment by the District Board of an itinerant staff for the repair of tube-wells, instead of leaving every small community to make its own arrangements, makes for economy and is a legitimate charge on the District fund.

The vital problem of rural water-supply in Bengal, however, will never be solved along the present lines. The resources of the District Boards are much too inadequate for tackling the problem

seriously. The only feasible course is to face the fact that the provision of water-supply in villages is a matter for the villagers themselves and that the greater part of the cost at least must be found by Union Boards or by other village organizations, in such a manner that the District Board is not put to any recurring commitment. This means in practice that the portion of a District Board's income which is earmarked for water-supply should be spent in the form of grants-in-aid to Union Boards or voluntary associations to supplement the funds which they raise themselves.

Closing balance.

199. The year closed with an actual balance of Rs. 21·7 lakhs, against Rs. 22·5 lakhs of the previous year. There were heavy balances in the Burdwan (Rs. 3,97,188) and the 24-Parganas (Rs. 3,69,529) districts. The large balance in Burdwan is attributed to the excess income under "Cess receipts" received late in the year, to larger receipts from Government on account of education, and the large amount remaining unspent under "Civil Works". The heavy balance at the credit of the 24-Parganas District Board represented the unspent balances amounting to Rs. 1,32,000 under the heads "Education" and "Medical", excess receipts on budget provision amounting to Rs. 1,33,736, and the refund by Government of Rs. 73,952 in connection with the Nowi-Sunthi and Jaboona projects. The Mymensingh District Board succeeded in reducing its balance from Rs. 2,27,323 to Rs. 1,76,613, but the latter is still an unduly large amount. The Midnapore (Rs. 8,583), Jessore (Rs. 2,656) and Hooghly (Rs. 2,145) District Boards, on the other hand, closed the year with unduly low balances. Regarding the Midnapore District Board, the Magistrate, Mr. Reid, remarks: "The Board not only spent the whole of their own income, but appropriated a large sum out of deposits lying with the Board".

Marine Department.

(1) Administration Report of the Port Commissioners, Calcutta, for 1925-26.

(2) Administration Report of the Howrah Bridge for 1925-26.

(3) Annual Report of the Port Officer, Calcutta, for 1925-26.

(4) Annual Report of the Shipping Officers, Bengal, for 1925-26.

(5) Administration Report of the Port Commissioners, Chittagong, for 1925-26.

Port of Calcutta.

Bengal Pilot Service.

200. At the end of the year there were 59 pilots, against the sanctioned strength of 74. There were four casualties during the year, two retired, one died and one resigned. No new Leadsmen was appointed during the year.

Vessels piloted.

201. The number of vessels piloted was 1,192 inwards, with a gross tonnage of 6,475,754, and 1,176 outwards, with a gross tonnage of 6,252,179. The corresponding figures in the previous year were 1,195 vessels inwards and 1,212 outwards, with a gross tonnage of 6,336,841 and 6,439,956, respectively. Only one vessel was detained at the Sandheads for want of a pilot, against 5 in the preceding year.

Pilotage receipts.

202. The pilotage receipts for the year amounted to Rs. 13,75,870, against Rs. 1,391,607 and 11,83,294 for the two preceding years.

Survey.

203. The total number of vessels (apart from Government vessels) surveyed during the year was 432, and the fees realised for the purpose amounted to Rs. 42,576.

Shipping Offices, Calcutta and Kidderpore.

Finance.

204. The receipts of the Shipping Offices during the year 1925-26 amounted to Rs. 1,38,117 and the expenditure to Rs. 86,276, against Rs. 1,32,357 and Rs. 81,406, respectively, in the previous year.

Seamen shipped and discharged.

205. The numbers of seamen of all nationalities shipped and discharged by the Shipping Offices during the year were 53,378 and 45,133, respectively, and those shipped and discharged by the different Consulates at Calcutta were 2,466 and 2,213, respectively, thus making a total of 55,844 seamen shipped and 47,346 seamen discharged, against the totals of 50,697 and 44,318, respectively, in the preceding year.

The Calcutta Port Trust.

Port and port approaches.

206. In the approaches to the port of Calcutta, the lighting was extended up to Hospital Point during the year under review; vessels can now navigate by night from just below the Eastern Gut to the sea.

Trade.

207. The total tonnage entering the port was 6,453,982 tons, or an increase of 1 per cent. over that of the previous year. The total tonnage leaving the port was 6,360,535 tons, or a decrease of 1 per cent. on that of the previous year. The tonnage of exports, inclusive of coal, amounted to 1,494,442, as compared with 1,779,054 tons in 1924-25. The shipments of coal amounted

to 1,796,415 tons, or 300,500 tons more than in the preceding year. The suspension of the dumping charge was continued throughout the year under review, and with effect from the 1st March, 1926, a rebate of 4 annas per ton was allowed on the river due in the case of graded coal. There was a decrease in the exports of tea, only 97,887 tons being shipped as compared with 1,03,994 tons in the previous year.

Revenue.

208. There was an opening debit balance of Rs. 46,103 on the 31st March, 1925. During the year revenue receipts of the Trust amounted to Rs. 3,21,27,748 and the expenditure was Rs. 2,90,44,100. A sum of Rs. 25 lakhs was transferred to the Revenue Reserve Fund, leaving a closing balance of Rs. 5,37,544 which was carried forward.

Capital.

209. There was an opening balance of Rs. 49·25 lakhs, which with a sterling loan of £5,00,000 raised during the year under the Trade Facilities Act, and a rupee Debenture Loan of Rs. 125 lakhs made a total sum of Rs. 220·93 lakhs available for expenditure on Capital Account. The expenditure on capital works during the year amounted to Rs. 190·10 lakhs, and a further sum of Rs. 4·8 lakhs was paid on account of the R. I. M. Dockyard, leaving a net balance of Rs. 26·03 lakhs. The expenditure during the year on the King George's Dock amounted to Rs. 156·85 lakhs. The total expenditure on the scheme up to the end of the year amounted to Rs. 527 lakhs, against the sanctioned estimate of Rs. 763·95 lakhs.

General matters.

210. The rate of hospital port due, leviable at the port of Calcutta, was reduced from 1 anna to 4 pies per ton with effect from 1st September, 1924. Steady progress was made in the work of the construction of King George's Docks in all sections.

Arrangements were made by the Commissioners during the year for the installation of a temporary Directional Wireless Telegraphy Station at Saugor Island.

Howrah Bridge.

211. The year under review opened with a debit balance on Revenue Account of Rs. 14,476. The income and expenditure of the Howrah Bridge during the year amounted to Rs. 4,44,772 and Rs. 3,53,228, as compared with Rs. 4,78,936 and Rs. 3,58,908, respectively, in the previous year. The indebtedness of the Bridge to the Port Commissioners was reduced during the year from Rs. 1,61,888 to Rs. 1,07,798.

Port of Chittagong.

Shipping.

212. The number of arrivals during 1925-26 was 806, of which 233 were ocean-going steamers, 559 inland steamers and 14 sailing vessels, with a total gross tonnage of 870,225 tons. In the previous year the number of vessels entering the port was 801, with a total gross tonnage of 8,21,036 tons.

Shipping casualties.

213. There were three cases of grounding and one case of collision during the year.

Chittagong Port Trust.

Finance.

214. The ordinary receipts of the Port Trust for the year under review amounted to Rs. 7,03,854, as against Rs. 5,54,316 in the previous year, the increase being mainly on account of river dues. The ordinary expenditure of the Trust was Rs. 4,31,191, as compared with Rs. 4,74,595 of the preceding year. There was no capital expenditure during the year. The sum of Rs. 15 lakhs, being the first instalment of a loan of Rs. 50 lakhs from Government for the development of the Port of Chittagong, was credited to Chittagong Port Fund on 1st March, 1926. The value of the Port Commissioners' properties was estimated on the 31st March, 1926, to be Rs. 71,34,013 and the liabilities excluding loans taken from Government amounted to Rs. 58,785.

Trade.

215. The total trade of the port during the year under review amounted to Rs. 15,82,45,440, or an increase of 5·9 per cent. over that of the previous year. The total value of the foreign trade in the year under report showed a decrease of 21·2 per cent. over the previous year. The increase in the total trade of the port during the year was due to the marked increase in the coasting import trade of the port, as well as the trade of the subordinate ports. The decline in the foreign trade is attributable to the fall of import trade in steel, cotton piece-goods, tea chests, machinery and lead, as well as the decline in the foreign export trade in tea.

Shipping Office, Chittagong.

Finance.

216. The revenue of the Shipping Office during the year was Rs. 874 and the amount expended was Rs. 1,005, against Rs. 746 and Rs. 1,136, respectively, in the previous year.

Seamen shipped and discharged.

217. The number of seamen of all nationalities shipped and discharged during the year was 107 and 619, respectively, against 216 and 417 during the previous year.

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Cultivators waiting to purchase improved jute seed produced by the Bengal Agricultural Department.
[*Government Farm, Dacca.*]

CHAPTER IV.—PRODUCTION AND DISTRIBUTION.

Agriculture.

[Report on the operations of the Department of Agriculture, Bengal, for the year 1925-26.]

Administration.

218. Mr. R. S. Finlow was in charge of the Department during the year except from 2nd July 1925 to 18th February 1926, when he was on leave. Dr. G. P. Hector, First Economic Botanist to the Government of Bengal, officiated for him during this period. A new post of Assistant Director of Agriculture was created during the year, into which the post of the Fibre Expert was merged.

Agricultural education.

219. The scheme for an Agricultural Institute at Dacca has not yet taken the final shape. The question of minimum entrance qualifications etc., is still under the consideration of Government, and funds have not yet been allotted for the erection of buildings, etc. The number of *bonâ fide* students at the Dacca Secondary Agricultural School has shown no tendency to increase, in spite of the attraction of a stipend of Rs. 10 per month to students who need support. In the vacant places 12 departmental demonstrators have been admitted, who are undergoing a " refresher " training. The scheme regarding the introduction of agriculture in the curricula of middle English and high English schools has now received Government approval. Its working has been handed over to the Education Department, but the Department of Agriculture will train teachers, share inspection and help generally wherever possible. A start has already been made with the selection of 15 schools at which the details of the scheme will be worked out. One teacher will be taken from each school for training at Dacca. Attached to each school there will be a small garden or demonstration farm. The intention behind this scheme is not to turn out trained farmers, but to neutralize the effect of the purely literal character of education hitherto provided and to give a bias towards agriculture.

Research and experiment—(a) Water-hyacinth.

220. The question of the best means of dealing with the problem of water hyacinth is still under consideration of Government. Meanwhile, a mass of information has been collected by a special officer appointed for the purpose.

(b) Fibres. Jute.

221. In the varietal tests at Dacca, D. 154 again maintained its standard and is well ahead as the heaviest yielding type of C. Capsularis yet met with. For the present, varietal trials of races of C. Olitorius with Chinsura Green as a standard have been suspended, as the yield of the latter appears to be so outstanding that nothing has yet been found to approach it in this respect. An investigation into the quality of jute fibre is being made in collaboration with the Indian Jute Mills Association, with a

view to find out the relative effects of environments, *i.e.*, soil, climate, retting, water, etc., and variety of seed on the quality of fibre. Results hitherto obtained tend to show that the seed may have at least a temporary effect. Investigations are also in progress regarding Sida, Rhea and Sisal hemp.

(c) Botany.

222. Under conditions for which they were selected, the three well-known departmental races, *Indrasail*, *Dudsar* and *Kataktara*, continued to show largely increased yields as compared with local paddies. Special attention is being given both to West Bengal and to Barisal where conditions do not suit the above types. Pure line selection applied to *balam* paddy of Barisal has in one strain resulted in an increased yield of 15 per cent. The results are, however, subject to confirmation by work now in progress. At Bankura the locally popular races of *Badkalamkati* and *Bhatmuri* have been subjected to selection and a full survey of local varieties is also in progress. The investigation of hybrids, obtained by crossing *aus* and *aman* paddies, continued at Dacca, from which it is hoped to obtain a complete series of types suitable for all conditions in the Presidency. Of fodder crops, Japanese millet showed great promise, and investigation on oil-seeds and pulses was also in progress.

Cotton.

Experiments have well established the suitability of cotton as a revenue crop in the high lands of West Bengal. In East Bengal it grows well, but it has been deliberately thrown over by the cultivator in favour of jute, because the latter not only pays better but can bring its return of money much quicker. There is, however, a possibility that cotton may regain its footing as a *rabi* crop on *char* lands. Now that the Rangamati (Chittagong Hill Tracts) Farm has been established, it will be possible to commence serious work on "Comillas" cotton.

(d) Mycology.

223. Betel-vine disease has done considerable damage to betel-vine crops in the southern portion of the Presidency, particularly near Calcutta, and in the districts of Khulna, Bakarganj, Noakhali and Chittagong. Investigations made at Pusa, Nagpur and Dacca indicate that the cause of the disease is a fungus (Phytophthera sp.) the treatment for which is a copper spray.

(e) Entomology.

224. Besides other work connected with crop pests, attempts are being made in collaboration with the Mycological Assistant to prevent rotting of potatoes kept for seed. Washing with 1 per cent. corrosive sublimate or 2 per cent. formalin, and subsequent fumigation with petrol vapour is the treatment.

(f) Chemistry.

225. Yellow *Tanna* retains its popularity as it is a good drought resister, can stand water-logging, resists jackal and even pig, is practically free from disease and is a very good yielder. Of newer varieties, C. O. 213, a hybrid seedling cane produced at

the Government sugarcane breeding station at Coimbatore, has shown great promise. The value of liming the collecting posts and efficacy of the McGlashan furnace in producing increased quantity of *gur* of improved quality were demonstrated on a working scale and interesting results were obtained. Departmental selection of *Matihari* and *Bhengi* tobacco are popular with cultivators, and they are spreading at a considerable rate. Seed of *next exotic tobaccos* has been imported for investigation. The cigars prepared at the Dacca Farm by the Department found a ready sale.

226. Operations at Rangpur Cattle Farm were conducted more or less on the assumption that a cattle expert would be appointed in the current year. The Ayrshire bull with a distinguished pedigree, which was imported, should be a valuable asset in the improvement of the milk-supply of Dacca and Calcutta. The public seemed to be taking increased interest in the departmental bulls placed at the different district farms. **Cattle breeding.**

227. After a delay of several years a 7″ tube well is to be sunk at the Dacca Farm for investigation into the value of irrigation. **Agricultural irrigation.**

228. At Nadia the Collector resumed charge of the Company Bagan on behalf of Government for the purpose of a farm. Work has begun at the Dinajpur and the Mainaguri Farms. A commencement has been made with the erection of buildings at Malda and at Rangamati which are likely to be finished in the current year. **New farms.**

229. The production and distribution of improved seeds is one of the most important functions of the Department. About 3,000 maunds (110 tons) of departmental jute seeds were available for sale in January 1925, and three times this quantity was in demand. The London Jute Association has granted £1,500 (Rs. 20,000) per annum for five years for distributing departmental jute seeds, and the Indian Jute Mills Association has guaranteed Government against loss on their sale. A portion of each of the Government farms continues to be run on an economic basis, and the results of the year show increased profits. The Khas Mahal Farm at Kishoreganj continues to do good work and to serve as a valuable centre for demonstration. Similar farms are going to be established at Kishoreganj, Krishnagar and Noakhali. There are now 100 private farms in this Province growing departmental crop. **Propaganda.**

230. The usual departmental contributions of Rs. 1,000 each were made to the Presidency and Burdwan Divisional Agricultural Associations. The Presidency Divisional Agricultural Association under Mr. J. N. Gupta, I.C.S., was an active body and practically every district under him did appreciable work. **Agricultural associations.**

Sericulture.

231. The Bengal Silk Committee held one meeting during the year. The number of nurseries remained the same, *viz.*, 11, and their main function is still the rearing and issue of disease-free seed of both *Nistari* and *Chotapolu* varieties to the selected and ordinary professional rearers. The Government nurseries distributed 21,262 *kahans* of cocoons during the year, the receipts amounting to Rs. 71,242. The total area of mulberry at the nurseries was about 150 acres. The nursery staff commenced demonstration work on improved methods in a few selected villages adjacent to departmental nurseries in the districts of Malda, Rajshahi, Murshidabad and Birbhum, and the results were satisfactory in all cases.

The sericultural schools at Rajshahi and Berhampore continue to educate sons of rearers in improved sericultural methods. At Rajshahi 7 students and at Berhampore 2 students passed the Final Examination, while 6 of them were paid rewards. The primary schools attached to the Piasbari, Amriti and Kumarpur Central Nurseries did useful work.

Weather and Crops.

[Season and Crop Report of Bengal for the year 1925-26; Crop Forecasts of Bengal for the year 1925-26, Agricultural Statistics of India, Volume I.]

Character of the season.

232. The season opened with good rainfall in East and North Bengal, resulting in early sowing, on a large scale, of autumn crops. Subsequently, excessive rain caused serious damage in the Rajshahi Division and also in parts of East Bengal. The districts which suffered most were Jalpaiguri, Dinajpur, Rangpur, Bogra, Malda, Mymensingh and Tippera. In West Bengal, seasonable weather facilitated preparatory tillage, but sowings were delayed in some cases by drought. Weather in June was generally normal, as also in July, excepting in West Bengal where drought interfered with *bhadoi* crops and with the transplantation of rice. In the latter part of the season, conditions in East and North Bengal were favourable; but in West Bengal damage was caused by drought, and in parts of North Bengal heavy rain at paddy flowering time affected the crop adversely. In the cold weather season, prolonged drought was experienced, with unfavourable effects, though late winter rain saved the situation to some extent. On the whole, owing to excessive rain the season was unfavourable for autumn crops in North Bengal and in parts of East Bengal, but favourable for winter rice and fair for spring crops, while in Western Bengal it was unfavourable chiefly owing to drought.

The following table furnishes the estimated area and outturn in 1925-26 of *bhadoi*, *aghani* and *rabi* crops, as compared with the corresponding estimates of the previous year:—

Name of harvest.	Normal area, in acres.	Area cultivated during 1924-25, in acres.	Area cultivated during 1925-26, in acres.	Taking 100 to represent the normal outturn per acre, how much represented the outturn for the year.	
				1924-25.	1925-26.
Bhadoi	9,226,300	8,155,200	8,593,900	73	73
Winter rice	16,842,000	15,589,800	15,619,300	86	92
Sugarcane	206,600	206,200	215,000	76	85
Other sugarcane producing plants	58,000	55,200	56,800	....	....
Rabi	4,464,700	3,740,800	3,818,800	77	76
Total ..	30,797,600	27,747,200	28,303,800	....	....

Bhadoi crops (excepting jute).

233. Rainfall was excessive in April and May in North Bengal and in parts of East Bengal. The monsoon was deficient in West Bengal, thereby affecting crops considerably. Conditions were normal in East Bengal during the monsoon. A fair crop was reaped for the Province as a whole. The outturn of the different *bhadoi* crops for the Presidency was 73 per cent. of the normal, being the same as last year.

Jute.

234. Weather was favourable on the whole in West and East Bengal, excepting Mymensingh, but very unfavourable in North Bengal. The gradual rise of the rivers was also a salutary factor. In certain highland tracts of Eastern Bengal, however, difficulty was experienced in retting, owing to deficient rainfall in August. In West Bengal the crop was good. In East Bengal it was satisfactory, except in Mymensingh. It was generally poor throughout Northern Bengal. The area and outturn of jute, excepting Cooch-Behar and Tripura States, were returned respectively at 2,523,734 acres and 6,922,096 bales of 400 lbs. each. These figures have since been revised to 2,680,200 acres and 7,942,000 bales, respectively.

Winter rice.

235. Heavy pre-monsoon showers during the months of April and May hampered field operations for deep water paddy in parts of North and East Bengal. A weak monsoon over the greater part of West Bengal interfered with the transplantation of paddy, especially in the highland tracts, but in East and North Bengal, conditions were generally favourable and there was an increase of area in cultivation. Rainfall was adequate during September and October and considerably helped the final development of the crop, especially in West Bengal. On the whole, a good crop was reaped in East and North Bengal and a fair one in

West Bengal. The provincial outturn worked out at 92 per cent. of the normal as against 86 per cent. last year.

Sugarcane.

236. The weather was favourable at the outset. But heavy rains with the break of the monsoon affected the outturn adversely in the important districts of North Bengal. In East Bengal, particularly in the Dacca Division, a good crop was reaped, but in West Bengal it suffered somewhat from insufficient rain. The outturn of the crop for the Province worked out at 85 per cent. of the normal this year, as against 76 per cent. last year.

Rabi crops.

237. There was good rainfall in the beginning of October and preparatory tillage and sowings were carried out at normal time. A drought then set in, damaging the early spring crops over the greater part of the Province. Winter rain improved prospects to some extent, but was too late for complete recovery. Good showers in March benefited the late-sown crops, especially summer rice and vegetables. On the whole, a fair crop was reaped. The outturn of the different *rabi* crops for the Province as a whole worked out at 76 per cent. of the normal, as against 77 per cent. of the last year.

Cotton.

238. Except for slight damage in the Tripura State during October, conditions were generally favourable in the important districts and a satisfactory crop was reaped. In Midnapore and Bankura, however, the outturn suffered to some extent from want of timely rain. The total outturn of cotton (both late and early), exclusive of Tripura State, was estimated at 22,959 bales this year, against 21,440 bales last year.

Area under cultivation.

239. The total cropped area was estimated to be 28,303,800 acres, as compared with 27,747,200 acres last year.

The figures for the principal crops are shown in the following table:—

Name of crop.	Normal area, in acres.	Area cultivated during 1924-25, in acres.	Area cultivated during 1925-26, in acres.
Rice	22,739,100	20,868,700	21,133,400
Other food grains including pulses and *marua*	1,831,400	1,335,000	1,380,800
Jute	2,310,300	2,357,600	2,523,700*
Oilseeds	1,486,800	1,043,400	1,053,000
Tobacco	242,000	280,300	293,400
Sugarcane	206,600	206,200	215,000

* Since revised to 2,680,200 acres.

240. Prices of rice receded somewhat with the winter paddy harvest, but were fairly high throughout the year. Jute prices which were firm at the beginning reached unprecedented high levels in apprehension of a short crop. Prices.

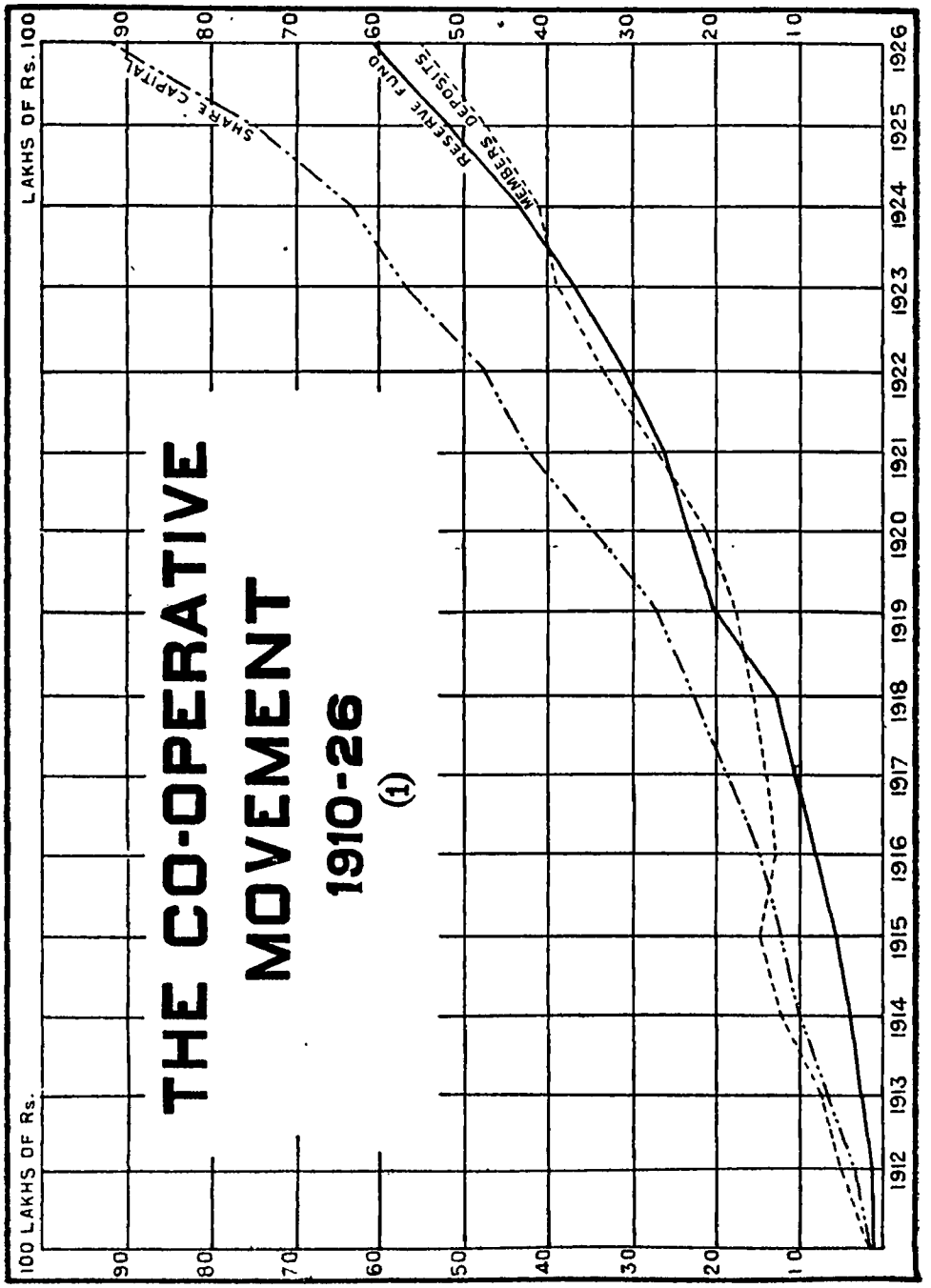
Co-operative Societies.

[Report on the working of the Co-operative Societies in Bengal for 1925-26.]

241. Mr. J. M. Mitra held the office of Registrar throughout the year. There was no change in the personnel of the superior staff during the year. Administration.

242. The number of societies of all classes rose from 11,081 to 12,819, an increase of 15·6 per cent., against 19·4 and 18·3, respectively, in the previous two years. Membership rose from 385,599 to 453,031, an increase of 17·4 per cent., against 16·1 and 13·4, respectively, in the two preceding years. The accession to membership was thus more marked than the increase in the number of societies. The total working capital rose from Rs. 6,18,38,550 to Rs. 7,52,77,018, *i.e.*, by 21·7 per cent., against 21·8 in the previous year. The addition to the working capital was thus relatively greater than the increase in the number of societies or accession to their membership. The actual cash employed in the movement amounted to Rs. 4·23 crores, against Rs. 3·98 crores in the preceding year. Out of this amount no less than Rs. 1·64 crores were provided by the members and the societies of all classes, against Rs. 1·81 crores in the year before. Development.

243. The Provincial Bank continued to prosper and its membership increased from 122 to 136, paid-up share capital from Rs. 5·48 lakhs to Rs. 6·98 lakhs and the total working capital from Rs. 61·20 lakhs to Rs. 75·30 lakhs. The volume of the business of the bank was almost double of that in the preceding year, and the turnover of its capital rose from about Rs. 2½ crores to nearly Rs. 5 crores. The amount of deposits received during the year from the public was more than double of that received in the preceding year, being Rs. 263·49 lakhs as against Rs. 116·21 lakhs. It had a liquid cover of 79 per cent., which was more than sufficient for its purpose. The Provincial Bank was able to meet fully the demands of its members and the loans issued rose from Rs. 27·97 lakhs to Rs. 41·10 lakhs. Its profit rose from Rs. 69,646, or 1·1 per cent. on its working capital, to Rs. 1,45,645, or 1·9 per cent. The Bengal Provincial Co-operative Bank, Ltd.


THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT
1910-26
(1)
100 LAKHS OF Rs.
LAKHS OF Rs. 100
SHARE CAPITAL
RESERVE FUND
MEMBERS DEPOSITS
10
20
30
40
50
60
70
80
90
1912
1913
1914
1915
1916
1917
1918
1919
1920
1921
1922
1923
1924
1925
1926

Central Banks.

244. The number of Central Banks during the year rose from 91 to 98. The total number of affiliated societies rose from 9,746 to 11,152, or by over 14 per cent., and the total working capital from Rs. 2,05,84,034 to Rs. 2,49.41,469, or by over 17 per cent. Thus, the addition to the working capital more than kept pace with the growth of membership. Over 61 per cent. of the working capital of the Central Banks was derived from deposits by non-members which amounted during the year to Rs. 1,53,86,865, as against Rs. 1,26,31,462 in the preceding year. The total repayments to Central Banks rose from Rs. 85·47 lakhs to Rs. 2·05 crores. The proportion of collection to the total loans outstanding at the beginning of the year was 116·6 per cent., as against 56·2 per cent. in the preceding year. The growing tendency to adopt the distinction between crop loans and loans for long-term purposes is responsible to a certain extent for this result. The amount of new loans was Rs. 2·41 crores in the year under report, as against Rs. 1·11 crores in the preceding year.

Agricultural credit.

245. The predominance of agricultural credit societies continued, and the total number of these societies rose from 9,835 to 11,169. The total membership rose from 246,043 to 280,503. The average membership of a society stood at 25 as in the year preceding. Out of the total working capital, share capital increased from Rs. 14·71 lakhs to Rs. 19·99 lakhs, members' deposits from Rs. 9·33 lakhs to Rs. 11·21 lakhs and reserve funds from Rs. 30·71 lakhs to Rs. 35·33 lakhs. The total of the funds owned by the societies amounted to Rs. 67·50 lakhs, as against Rs. 54·77 lakhs in the preceding year. Loans from Central Banks increased from Rs. 1,49,74,424 to Rs. 1,78,76,083 and formed over 68 per cent. of the total working capital of these societies.

The collections during the year amounted to Rs. 79·85 lakhs, or 45·5 per cent. of the amount due at the beginning of the year, as against Rs. 62·71 lakhs, or 41·8 per cent. in the preceding year. The collections were thus better than in the preceding year. The overdues amounted to Rs. 51·10 lakhs, or 24·1 per cent., as against Rs. 49·26 lakhs, or 28·3 per cent. in the preceding year.

Non-agricultural credit.

246. The total number of these societies rose from 257 with a membeship of 82,078 to 289 with a membership of 99,300. They are mostly on limited liability basis and include urban banks, employees' societies composed of salary earners in Government or Municipal offices or in commercial firms or industrial concerns and communal societies which restrict their membership to persons of a particular community, caste or class. The share capital of these societies increased from Rs. 29·90 lakhs to Rs. 36·19

lakhs, non-members' deposits from Rs. 41·59 lakhs to Rs. 57·34 lakhs, reserve funds from Rs. 6·20 lakhs to Rs. 7·48 lakhs and the total working capital from Rs. 117·47 lakhs to Rs. 146·11 lakhs. The societies provided 58·6 per cent. of their working capital as against 62·3 per cent. in the preceding year, the decrease in the proportion of owned capital being due to the formation, during the year, of a larger number of societies, mostly in the mufassal, which had largely to depend on borrowed capital for their working. The profits earned rose from Rs. 4·40 lakhs to Rs. 5·13 lakhs, but the dividend paid did not exceed 12½ per cent. in any case.

Societies other than credit. (i) Purchase and sale societies.

247. The number of these societies increased from 33 to 53, their total membership from 5,337 to 9,565 and their total working capital from Rs. 94,419 to Rs. 2,34,828.

Noteworthy progress was made in the direction of organising sale and supply societies on a large scale, so that they might be able to handle a large quantity and guarantee quality. To the Chandpur Sale and Supply Society in the Chittagong Division belongs the credit of leading the way in this direction. It has been able to provide a share capital of about a lakh of rupees to acquire extensive godowns, to put up pressing machines, to purchase a steam-launch and to engage a number of boats for the easy and quick transport of jute from its numerous outstations. The Sarishabari Sale and Supply Society in Mymensingh, which was registered last year, carried on a little business in jute during the year and has since been reconstituted with a view to working on the lines of the Chandpur society. The Bhanguria Sale and Supply Society in Pabna was organised and registered during the year for the sale of jute. The societies at Chandpur, Serajganj, Sarishabari and Naogaon have been able within this short time to establish their marks with the mills. The society at Alamdanga in Nadia, which was organised and registered during the year, and the Taki Sale and Supply Society have also taken up the sale of jute. Among paddy sale societies one of the most successful is the Gosaba Society in the 24-Parganas. During the short time of its existence, it has accumulated a reserve fund of Rs. 4,000. It is now constructing a rice mill which will be the first co-operative mill of its kind in this Province. The Taki Sale and Supply Society in the 24-Parganas started work and built a fine godown of its own during the current year. The Pingla and Khelar Societies in Midnapore had each a large volume of transactions though there was no addition to their share capital or membership. All the paddy sale societies were able to secure better prices for their members. In order to

assist the paddy sale societies to effect the most profitable disposal of their stock, the Bengal Co-operative Organisation Society started in April, 1925, a central godown in Calcutta.

Naogaon ganja cultivtor's society.

The Naogaon Ganja Cultivators' Co-operative Society continued to prosper. The membership increased from 3,681 to 3,694 and the share capital from Rs. 41,310 to Rs. 42,420. The working capital decreased from Rs. 5,75,637 to Rs. 5,26,396, as owing to sufficiency of funds no loan was taken from the Provincial Bank. The sale proceeds declined from Rs. 10,77,921 to Rs. 9,57,435, although the quantity sold was greater. This was due to reduction in the wholesale price of *ganja*.

Stores and supply societies.

The stores movement has not yet been able to rehabilitate itself, though attempts continue to be made in this direction. The total number of these societies fell from 71 to 57 and their membership from 9,959 to 9,073, while their sales declined in value from Rs. 4·73 lakhs to Rs. 3·76 lakhs. There was, however, a further reduction in the total of the losses sustained by these societies from Rs. 33,009 to Rs. 4,330. Improvement in this respect, along with a decrease in the number of societies and in their sales, is due to the ruthless weeding out of hopeless societies.

(*ii*) Irrigation societies.

248. There was a considerable expansion of the co-operative irrigation movement during the year, although no stream scheme was taken up as in the preceding year. The total number of irrigation societies rose from 268 with a total membership of 10,368 to 350 with a total membership of 12,092. Of these societies 170 are in Bankura, 168 in Birbhum, 4 in Burdwan, 4 in Hooghly and 1 in Midnapore. Of the 4 societies in Hooghly, 3 have commenced work, though there is room for improvement in their working.

In Bankura the number of societies increased by 28 during the year. The total membership rose from 6,564 to 7,073, the total working capital from Rs. 1,48,093 to Rs. 1,69,326 and the total irrigable area from 46,647 bighas to 50,612 bighas. In Birbhum the number of societies increased from 116 to 168, their membership from 3,623 to 4,745, their total working capital from Rs. 35,210 to Rs. 54,765 and their total irrigable area from 15,502 bighas to 20,060 bighas. A noteworthy development during the year was the starting of an embankment society in the district of Khulna for protecting lands from the ingress of salt water. The Irrigation Society in Gobra did not do any work after incurring some loss over the purchase of a pumping machine in the preceding year.

(iii) Agricultural associations.

249. The number of agricultural associations rose from 20 to 21, their membership increased from 325 to 8,249 and their total working capital from Rs. 8,381 to Rs. 31,024. The working of these associations continues to receive attention, but they are still very far from attaining their aim of being model agricultural farms organised on a co-operative basis with a view to arousing and enlisting popular interest in scientific agriculture.

(iv) Production and sale societies—(a) Milk societies.

250. The number of milk societies increased from 63 to 74, out of which 71 are in the neighbourhood of Calcutta and are affiliated to the Calcutta Milk Union. During the year the Union with its constituent societies made remarkable progress. Thanks to the financial assistance received from the Corporation, it was able to erect a dairy fitted up with up-to-date plants imported direct from Europe for the purpose of pasteurising and treating milk. The dairy has been spoken of as " the finest in the East " by persons competent to express an opinion.

(b) Weavers' societies.

251. The number of weavers' societies increased from 200 with a membership of 3,334 and a total working capital of Rs. 1,78,596 to 233 with a membership of 3,938 and a total working capital of Rs. 2,46,553. The Bankura societies, numbering 62, form the most important group in this section. They are affiliated to the Bankura Industrial Union. There was a considerable expansion of this section of the movement in the Alamdanga centre in Nadia owing to the establishment of a yarn sale depôt at that place by the Chuadanga Central Bank. The Dacca group includes 6 societies among *jamadani* workers. These societies procure their supply of raw materials themselves, but sell their finished products through the Dacca Industrial Union. The organisation of weavers on a co-operative basis in this district has received a great impetus from the establishment of this Industrial Union. The most important society in this group is the Bagerhat Weaving Union, Ltd. Its provision of 4 power looms in its factory was noticed in the previous report. The extension of the application of power is now under proposal.

(c) Fishermen's societies.

252. The number of these societies increased from 62 to 92, their membership from 2,046 to 2,513, and their total working capital from Rs. 63,250 to Rs. 76,113. Most of these societies work on a credit basis, as they have been generally unsuccessful in obtaining settlements of *jalkars*. It has, however, been now directed by Government that this Department should be consulted by the Collectors, before the expiry of existing leases of Government fisheries, as to whether they cannot be taken up by fishermen's societies. It is hoped that this procedure will help most of the societies in obtaining *jalkars*.

253. The eight conch-shell workers' societies in the town of Dacca, which are affiliated to the Dacca Industrial Union, worked well on the whole. They had a membership of 217 and a paid-up share capital of Rs. 96,840. They purchased shells worth Rs. 44,392 through the Dacca Industrial Union, as against Rs. 92,325 in the previous year. The decrease in value was due to insufficient supply of shells, the catches having proved inadequate although the price was higher. There are two other conch-shell societies in the Province, one in Bankura and the other in Khulna. The Taltolla Conch-shell Workers' Society in Khulna is working well on its own capital, but the members experienced much difficulty in obtaining a supply of shells. The question of meeting the requirements of this society from the supply at Dacca has since been taken up by the Department.

(d) Conch-shell workers' societies.

254. The Madhyamgram Chican Workers' Society in the 24-Parganas, the only society of its kind, continues to work well.

(e) Chican workers' society.

255. The Braziers' Society at Brahmanbaria obtained a loan of Rs. 7,000 from Government during the year, while the local Central Bank has also been extending financial accommodation to the society, whenever required.

(f) Braziers' society.

256. The guiding spirit of the co-operative public health movement is the Central Anti-malarial Society in Calcutta. The number of societies affiliated to the Central Society rose from 433 to 869, out of which 263 societies, or 30 per cent., were registered, as against 98 societies, or 22·6 per cent., in the preceding year. These societies are generally doing very useful work within their respective areas by combating preventable diseases such as malaria, kala-azar and cholera. As many as 30 of them have been able, with the help of loans from the Central Anti-malarial Society, to sink deep tube-wells within their areas, for the purpose of supplying pure drinking water to the villages.

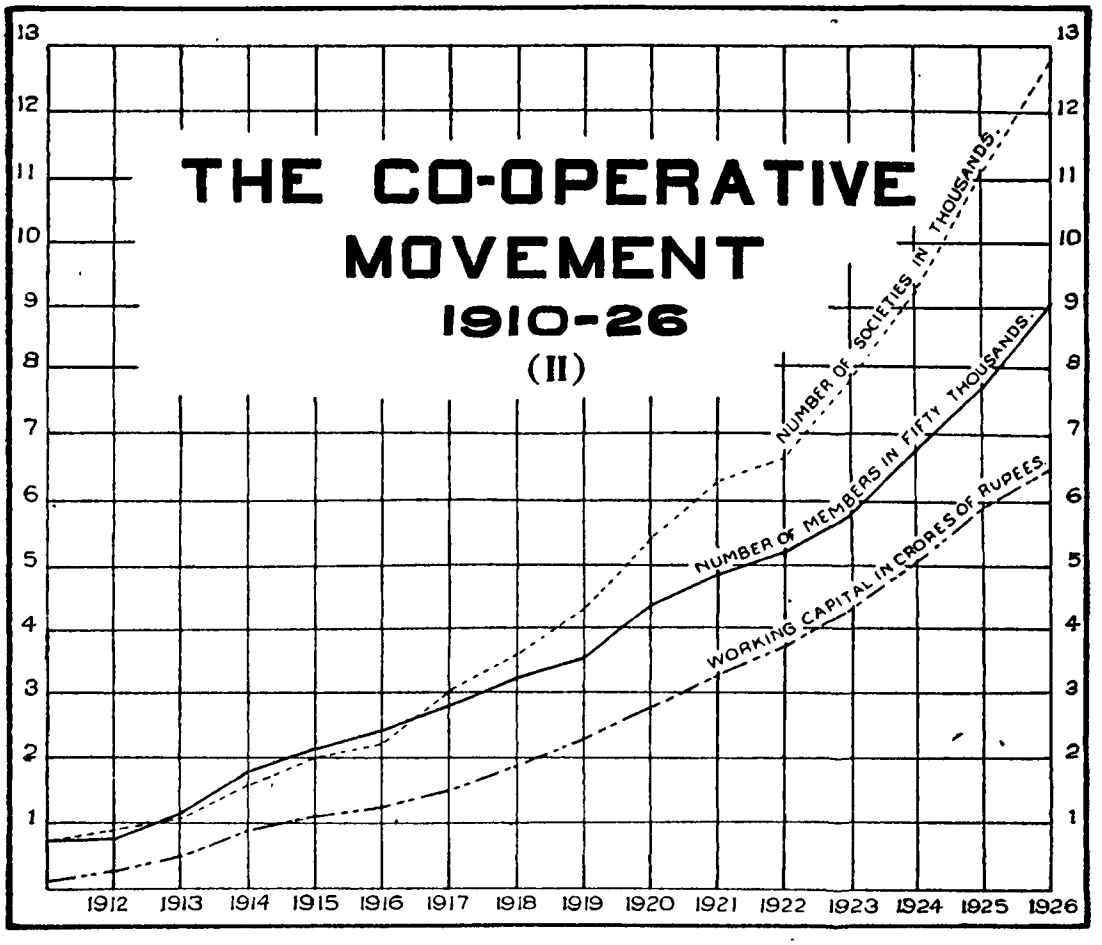
(v) Miscellaneous societies—
(a) Anti-malarial societies.

257. The number of zemindari societies continues to be steady at 2, and both the societies are in need of more land for the expansion of their activities.

(b) Zemindari societies.

258. Among the 5 *mahila samitis* which were organised by the Saroj Nalini Dutt Memorial Association and registered during the year, 3 are in the district of the 24-Parganas, 1 in Tala (Calcutta) and 1 in the district of Bankura. They have a membership of 84, and the total profits earned by them amounted to Rs. 241. The members of the Bankura Society prepared coarse silk *chaddars*. The societies in Calcutta and in the 24-Parganas did tailoring business, and the cloths prepared by them found a ready sale. The Barasat Society has established a primary school for girls.

(c) Women's organisation.


THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT
1910-26
(II)
NUMBER OF SOCIETIES IN THOUSANDS.
NUMBER OF MEMBERS IN FIFTY THOUSANDS.
WORKING CAPITAL IN CRORES OF RUPEES.
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13
1912 1913 1914 1915 1916 1917 1918 1919 1920 1921 1922 1923 1924 1925 1926

(d) Bengal Co-operative Organisation Society, Limited.

259. The re-organisation of the society on the lines indicated in last year's report was effected during the year, and the reconstituted society was registered under the Co-operative Societies Act on the 9th October 1925. Although naturally it was mainly occupied during the year with preliminaries, the society has made a promising beginning. Government sanctioned an additional annual grant of Rs. 7,000 in order to enable the society to carry on its work in a systematic and effective manner, and in particular to improve its two periodicals issued, specially from the point of view of co-operative propaganda and co-operative education, to arrange for the delivery of lectures on co-operation both in Calcutta and in mufassal, to establish a free reading room and library of co-operative literature in the neighbourhood of College Square with a view to attracting college students to the co-operative movement, and to organise training classes in Calcutta in which lectures would be delivered on co-operation and allied subjects.

(e) Departmental Information Bureau.

260. The Information Bureau attached to the Department arranged for the display of the products of industrial societies at the important shows in the Province. It has been rendering increasing assistance to the industrial societies in the matter of the supply of their raw materials and disposal of their finished stuff.

Horticulture.

[Annual Report of the Royal Botanic Garden and other Gardens in Calcutta and of the Lloyd Botanic Garden, Darjeeling, for the year 1925-26.]

The Royal Botanic Garden.

261. Climatic conditions during the year were normal for horticultural operations. Spells of scorching weather in the early part of the year were balanced by occasional showers towards the end of the hot season. Exotics benefited from these timely rains and from the well-distributed monsoon, though there was a slight set-back in August and September when the monsoon became weak and irregular. All classes of plants stood the dry cold weather well. The absence of adequate rains during this season involved additional care in watering the beds of annuals in the open and of foliage plants in the shade houses. The display of orchids was enriched by arrivals from Assam and was quite up to the standard. Mention was made in the previous report of the decaying state of the great Banyan tree and of the proposals for dealing with it. The young Banyans planted in the excised centre of the main growth are thriving well, but are still too small to be grafted to

the old stock. Some 41,916 plants were distributed to Government institutions, district boards, railways and municipalities, and some 2,703 plants were received. Eighty-six packets and 80 lbs. of seeds were distributed, and 60 packets received in addition to barrels of Mahogany seed from Kew.

Calcutta Gardens.

262. The display of annuals, though somewhat late, was up to the usual standard of excellence. A special rose garden was started and a number of fresh additions made to the permanent collections, including species of Mongolia Cinamomum, Phyllanthus, Cassia, Croton and Dracaena.

Lloyd Botanic Garden, Darjeeling.

263. The rainfall for the year was normal and its distribution was, on the whole, favourable for garden operations. Snow did a certain amount of damage which was, however, made good by expert pruning. The Curator went on a collecting expedition to Sikkim during May, and the Lepcha collector went as far as the Nepal frontier in quest of the annual collections of Himalayan seeds.

Cinchona Plantations and Factory.

[Report of the Government Cinchona Plantations and Factory for the year 1925-26.]

Plantation.

264. The area under cinchona in the Government plantations at Mungpoo and Munsong at the end of the year was 3,153 acres, showing an increase of 93 acres over the area of the previous year. There is considerable difficulty in securing suitable soil for further extension of the plantations. The result of the experiment in the Latpanchor spur is not hopeful, and the proposal for an experiment in the Samsing area is under examination.

Outturn.

265. The factory at Mungpoo deals not only with the bark produced in those plantations, but also with Java bark supplied by the Government of India which pay for the cost of extraction to the Government of Bengal. The quantity of bark harvested in the plantations was 538,783 lbs., as against 432,553 lbs. in the previous year. The full outturn could not, however, be utilised in the factory as there was a large stock of Java bark which required to be treated first. On the whole, 1,039,912 lbs. of bark were treated against 935,998 lbs. in the previous year.

Finance.

266. The quantity of factory produce sold during the year was 42,551 lbs., against 43,143 lbs. in the previous year. The decrease was due to cinchona febrifuge, which could not maintain its exceptionally large sale of the previous year. The sale rates of quinine sulphate and other quinine salts were further reduced.

Receipts from sales amounted to Rs. 7,58,290 and the total expenditure to Rs. 3,72,870. The profit and loss valuation gave a balance of Rs. 1,93,566 on the profit side, and although it was less than in the previous year, the financial results were on the whole satisfactory.

Forests.

[The Annual Progress Report on the Forest Administration of the Presidency of Bengal for the year ending the 31st March 1926.]

Administration.

267. The forests of Bengal lie mainly along the Himalayas in the north, the Sunderbans in the south and in Chittagong district and Chittagong Hill Tracts in the south-east. The total area under the administration of the Forest Department at the end of the year was 10,602 square miles, comprising 5,300 square miles of Reserved forest, 1,857 square miles of Protected forests and 3,445 square miles of unclassed State forests. The main feature of the year was the creation of a new division, called the Dacca-Mymensingh Division, for those parts of the Attia forest the management of which had been taken over by Government on the application of the zemindars.

The total outlay on the constitution of State forests was Rs. 16,002 in the year under review. The area of Reserved forests was increased by 11 square miles and of the Protected forests by 104 square miles, 12 square miles of forest were settled, 3 miles of exterior boundaries of new reserves were demarcated and 918 miles of old boundaries repaired. No new working plan was started during the year.

Communications and buildings.

268. The total outlay on the essential work of constructing and repairing roads and bridges amounted to Rs. 35,714, against Rs. 50,440 of the previous year. Of this sum Rs. 6,286 were spent on 6 miles of new cart roads, 1 mile of new bridle path, 21 miles of foot-paths and 6 new bridges, and the rest for the maintenance of 333 miles of cart roads, 743 miles of bridle paths and 233 miles of other paths.

The expenditure on buildings was Rs. 59,296, or about Rs. 36,500 less than in the previous year. The greater part was devoted to the repairs of rest-houses and quarters for subordinates.

Sylviculture.

269. According to the working plans, 400 square miles of forest is to be clear-felled and regenerated at the rate of 15 square miles a year. The difficulty experienced in securing suitable labour has proved a serious handicap to the progress of the work

all along and only a little over 2 square miles was taken up during the year, making a total of about 22 square miles as the result of 5 years' working.

Exploitation.

270. There was a substantial increase in both the quantity and value of the timber and other products extracted by departmental agency. The value rose from Rs. 4,30,097 to Rs. 5,56,871. Apart from sleepers for the Railways, departmental extraction of timber consisted mainly of the produce of the sawmills at Sukna and Toong for which there is a ready market in the tea gardens. There was also an increase in the demand for fuel cut and supplied departmentally.

Departmental operations, however, account for only a small percentage of forest products, the greater part being sold standing to purchasers either by auction or on a royalty basis. There was again a considerable increase both in the outturn and value of the timber sold in this way. The outturn increased from 17·9 million cubic feet to 19·5 million, while the value rose from Rs. 12,63,124 to Rs. 15,30,923.

Financial results.

271. The financial results were satisfactory. In spite of the scarcity of funds for the extension of roads and bridle paths, which are absolutely necessary for the proper expansion of forest exploitation, the total revenue rose to Rs. 28,56,428, an advance of about Rs. 4 lakhs on the figures of the previous year. Expenditure was less than that of the previous year by Rs. 1,25,000.

Industries.

[Report of the Department of Industries, Bengal, for the year 1925.]

Administration.

272. Dr. D. B. Meek and, during his absence on leave, Mr. A. T. Weston held charge of the Department during the year. The appointment of an Industrial Engineer and an Inspector of Technical and Industrial Institutions completed the gap in the superior staff, but owing to the abolition of the posts of Superintendents of Industries as a measure of retrenchment, the beneficent activities of the Department by way of technical advice, technical assistance and provision of marketing facilities were severely restricted.

Research and experiments.

273. A fully equipped industrial research laboratory which was a long-felt want was erected during the year. At the instance of the Bande Mataram Match Factory, experiments were undertaken under the control of the Chemist in the bleaching of Gengwa wood, as a result of which the most economic bleaching powder and process of treatment were evolved. Formulæ for

several very good compositions for match heads were also worked out. An improved hackling machine was devised for the development of sunn hemp rope making on cottage industry lines. Machines were also improved for spinning jute yarn on small scale, for bending and marking umbrellas and for cutting conch-shells. Experiments were made with success at the Serampore Weaving Institute in the extraction of cocoanut fibres as also in the weaving of coarse jute and coir fabrics and in the spinning of jute, coir, sunn hemp, waste silk and wool.

Calcutta Research Tannery.

274. In the Calcutta Research Tannery useful investigations were conducted not only into the methods of producing the more important varieties of commercial leather from the available raw materials under the local climatic conditions, but also into some of the chemical problems connected with tanning. The cow hides of different parts of the Province were surveyed along with investigations on the manufacture of box sides. It is gratifying to note that two of its apprentices have started the business of leather case-making on their own account. Government have decided to retain the Tannery as a permanent institution under the designation of Bengal Tanning Institute.

Assistance to industries.

275. At the present stage of industrial development of the country, local industry must necessarily depend on technical assistance and advice, and the Department promptly responded to the call of industrialists seeking such help from the various parts of the Province. The Department also did all that is practicable to secure special concessions on behalf of such of the industries as applied for them. It has also been alive to the fact that one of the essential factors for industrial development in this country is the organisation of markets for the finished products, and all that is practicable has been done to secure facilities in marketing for those who have applied for the same.

Technical education.

276. The total number of institutions, public and private, was 113 against 96 in the previous year, and the number of pupils attending them was 6,629 against 5,061. The total expenditure, direct and indirect, incurred on these institutions was Rs. 10,81,070 against Rs. 6,71,423 in the previous year. Considerable headway was made not only by providing for the establishment of new technical institutions and by increasing the allotment for grants-in-aid, but also by awarding technical scholarships. The long standing scheme formulated during the first Ministry for the establishment of a Silk-weaving and Dyeing Institute at Berhampore was sanctioned during the year. Arrangement has been made for housing the Institute in one of the vacant buildings of the Berhampore Lunatic Asylum. Sanction was accorded to the establishment of a weaving school at Suri experimentally for one

year, with the co-operation of the District Board. Steps were taken for the opening of a survey class in the Burdwan Technical School in collaboration with the District Board. Administrative approval was also given to the establishment of 12 additional peripatetic schools, which now await the provision of funds. It was decided to retain the existing technical schools at Rangpur, Bogra, Barisal and Pabna as models for non-Government technical institutions in the Province, and the question of improving their condition is now under consideration. While accepting the principle under-lying the recommendation of the Retrenchment Committee that technical education should generally be stimulated by the system of grants-in-aid, Government recognise the necessity for the establishment of more technical schools in the Province to suit local conditions, with the co-operation of the local bodies where available.

Calcutta Technical School.

277. A Principal for the Calcutta Technical School was recruited during the year to make preliminary arrangements for the school which has since been opened.

State technical scholarships.

278. Two State technical scholarships were awarded for the study of glass manufactures and refractories; one scholar joined the Sheffield University and the other the Pittsburgh University.

Manufacture and Mines.

[Statistical Abstract for British India.]

Jute.

279. During the year under report there was an increase in the area under jute cultivation, including Cooch Behar State, the acreage being 2,715,000 against 2,390,000 in the previous year. The outturn was 6,983,000 bales—a decrease of about 4 per cent. The decrease was due to a poor crop in some of the principal jute-growing areas. There were 84 jute mills at work, employing on an average 329,528 operatives—a decrease of 4,788 from the previous year. The number of looms and spindles at work in the jute mills were 49,910 and 1,050,684, respectively, as against 49,470 and 1,047,785 in 1924-25. The authorised capital in rupees, sterling and dollars was Rs. 20,16,82,000, £21,25,000 and $1,20,00,000, respectively.

Cotton.

280. Thirteen cotton mills were at work, employing on an average 13,559 persons daily as against 12,990 persons in 1924-25. The number of looms and spindles was 2,781 and 368,208, respectively, as compared with 2,823 and 347,704 in the year 1924-25. The authorised capital was Rs. 2,77,00,000.

281. The area under tea in 1925 was 193,158 acres (including figures for the Tripura State), as against 186,626 acres in the previous year. The quantity of tea manufactured was 85,279,396 lbs., as against 87,459,477 lbs. in 1924. The number of tea plantations totalled 364, employing on an average 160,615 permanent and 10,348 temporary hands daily. Tea garden factories now come under the Indian Factories Act. During the year 220 such factories were in operation, and the total average number of operatives employed in them was 14,315. Tea.

282. There was only one silk mill under the operation of the Indian Factories Act, employing a daily average of 112 operatives. The Government nurseries distributed 21,262 *kahans* of seed cocoons, and the selected rearers 18,000 *kahans*, during the year. The total production of seed (cocoons) during the year may be taken to be 39,262 *kahans of* disease-free seeds, raised partly by Government nurseries and partly by private agencies under Government supervision. Silk.

283. The acreage under sugar crops increased from 261,400 to 271,800 in 1925-26. The Cossipore Sugar Works, which is the only regular sugar factory under the Indian Factories Act in the Province, employed a daily average of 100 operatives. Sugar.

284. The number of collieries worked during the year decreased from 250 to 236 and the number of persons employed in them from 43,621 to 42,781. The total output of coal also decreased from 5,031,655 tons to 4,913,852 tons. Thus, the percentage decrease of the number of collieries was to that of the total output of coal as 5·6 to 2·3. The Coal Grading Board Act was passed in September 1925. The rebate on export coal, certified by the Coal Grading Board, in railway freight to Calcutta on the East Indian and Bengal-Nagpur Railways was increased from 25 to 37½ per cent. and the Calcutta Port dues on shipments of graded coal were reduced from 8 annas to 4 annas per ton. The wagon-supply in the coal fields was good throughout the year, and as buyers were able to obtain better supplies of the better qualities of coal at a comparatively low rate, many mines raising the poorer qualities found increasing difficulty in keeping open. The tendency throughout the year was towards lower prices for both coal and coke. Coal.

285. There were 3 paper mills at work during the year, employing on an average 3,744 persons daily. They produced 22,265 tons of paper, valued at Rs. 1,11,86,407. Paper.

286. Only one woollen-mill with 10 looms and 288 spindles was at work during the year, employing on an average 150 persons Wool.

daily. It produced 93,287 lbs. of blankets, valued approximately at Rs. 1,16,608. It is a Government concern and is in the Dacca Jail.

Salt and saltpetre.

287. The two refineries produced 1,356 maunds of saltpetre, against 1,059 maunds in 1924-25. *Sitta* (impure salt) to the amount of 109 maunds was educed in the process of refinement, but no purified salt. There was no sale of purified salt during the year.

Miscellaneous Manufactures in each Division.

Presidency.

288. The position remained much the same as in the previous year. Krishnagar maintained its reputation for clay modelling and Santipur for its hand-made cloth. The cotton-weaving industry was revived in Punra of Basirhat subdivision. A large match factory was started in the sadar subdivision of the Khulna district during the year. There was a slight expansion in the manufacture of padlocks in the Murshidabad district, while in its other manufactures it maintained its previous record of usefulness.

Burdwan.

289. The depression in the coal trade continued during the year. The paper mills of Asansol passed through financial difficulties and had to face a strike lasting for 2 weeks. The two large iron foundries at Kulti and Hirapur were amalgamated during the year. There was a marked increase in the number of rice mills in the town of Burdwan and, though not so marked, in the districts of Birbhum, Bankura and Midnapore. A silk factory was also registered in the Rampurhat subdivision. There was an increase in the number of tobacco factories in the Bankura district. A hosiery factory was started in the town of Midnapore. In the Hooghly district, the rice mills suffered greatly from the prevailing high prices of paddy. The lac-refining factory at Serampore closed down. A small factory for making glazed earthenware was started at Kotrung in that subdivision. The jute mills and iron works and foundries were fairly prosperous in the district of Howrah.

Dacca.

290. The manufactures of this division were in about the same position as in the previous year. The oil-cloth factory in the Mymensingh district, which did well in the previous year, however, closed down. The Shatore "pati" which once had a reputation of its own is now dying out. The Bhola Hosiery Company maintained its market, owing to the excellent quality of its products. The propaganda for finding a market for the Kontha embroidery work of Faridpur has not met with any success as yet.

Rajshahi.

291. The tea industry flourished during the year. There was a marked development in the silk industry of Bogra in all its

branches. The rearing of *Eri* silk-worms and reeling of *Eri* yarns were extended in operation. But the number of weavers being limited, the yarns were exported as before to Assam for being dyed, bleached and woven into piece-goods. In Malda, the reeling business suffered a little, owing to a fall in the price of silk yarn. In the cultivation of lac, Malda showed considerable increase. The Mission Industries, Limited, of Kalimpong, underwent further development during the year and employed over 400 persons.

Chittagong.

292. The manufacture of umbrella handles at Sitakund in the district of Chittagong showed no improvement. The Department of Industries carried out a demonstration of a scientific method of manufacturing such handles, and expects to have given an impetus to that industry thereby. The *hooka* and *naicha* industry of Comilla continued to be on a large scale, and in other industries also Noakhali and Tippera maintained their ground.

Working of the Indian Factories Act, 1911 (XII of 1911).

[Annual Report on the working of the Indian Factories Act in Bengal for the year 1925.]

Number of factories and operatives.

293. The total number of registered factories in Bengal at the close of 1925 came up to 1,215, employing, on an average, 551,342 persons daily, against 1,104 factories, employing 543,123 persons, at the end of the previous year. Jute, cotton and rice mills, match factories, shipbuilding and engineering works employed an increased number of workers, while there was a decrease in the number of persons employed in railway works, jute presses and general engineering works. The average daily number of women employed in registered factories was 74,180, an increase of 2,521 over the figure for 1924, while the number of children employed fell to 33,851, as against 35,040, in the previous year. The decrease in child labour is attributed to difficulties experienced in jute mills on account of its exploitation by time-keepers and sardars. Some mills discontinued altogether the employment of this class of labour, while in others the number employed was greatly reduced.

Inspections and staff.

294. One hundred and sixteen factories were inspected more than three times during the year, 117 factories were inspected three times, 212 twice and 406 once during the year. Two hundred and ninety-seven factories, mainly in the tea districts, remained uninspected. The work of inspection was hampered throughout the

year by lack of staff. The Chief Inspector of Factories was on leave for nine months during the year and another senior Inspector was compelled to retire from service on account of continued ill-health. The services of a third Inspector were lent to the Government of Bihar and Orissa for the greater part of the year. Two new appointments were made in the Inspecting staff.

Sanitary arrangements.

295. There was further improvement in the sanitary arrangements in factories. Seven new septic tanks were installed in factories during the year. It is noteworthy that there is a growing tendency among jute mill owners to undertake proper sewerage schemes, involving considerable capital outlay. One or two rice mills also have undertaken the improvement of their drainage systems, but the problem of the disposal of the effluent from the boiling of paddy has not been properly tackled by rice mills or municipalities.

Housing conditions.

296. The housing conditions of industrial workers are being improved gradually. In many places the old *kutcha* type of cooly lines is being replaced by *pucca* dwellings. Filtered or tube-well water is provided in most of the larger factories.

General health.

297. The general health of the operatives during the year was good. A few cases of cholera and small-pox were reported from some of the mill areas, but there was no epidemic of a serious nature.

Wages and labour supply.

298. Wages generally remained steady during the year. In match factories, however, owing to the rapid development of the industry, the demand for child labour in the box-filling department was greater than the supply, and its wages consequently higher.

Accidents.

299. The total number of accidents during the year was 2,680, of which 79 were fatal, 909 serious and 1,692 slight, showing an increase of 30 fatal, 178 serious and 250 slight accidents over the figures of the preceding year. No particular cause can be assigned for this unfortunate increase, which has occurred in spite of greater attention paid to the fencing of machinery. The operation of the Workmen's Compensation Act is probably responsible to a certain extent for the increase in reported minor accidents.

Prosecutions.

300. One hundred and eighty-seven prosecutions under the Act were instituted during the year, of which 154 ended in conviction. In 3 cases the accused were discharged with a warning, and 9 cases were withdrawn. The remaining cases were pending at the close of the year.

Bengal Steam Boiler Commission.

[Report for the period January to December 1925.]

Scope of the report.

301. As was mentioned in the report of the previous year, the jurisdiction of the Bengal Boiler Commission extends to the provinces of Bihar and Orissa and Assam. The present report deals with the operations of the Commission so far as they relate to Bengal, touching the other two provinces only where necessary for the purpose.

Inspection.

302. During the year the Commissioners held one special and twelve ordinary meetings. The increase of work under the new Act, in the registration of boilers, necessitated the strengthening of the staff by the appointment of temporary Inspectors. With the gradual completion of the work of registration, some reduction of the temporary staff became possible, and during the year the staff was reduced by one temporary officer. The total number of boilers on the register in Bengal was 4,983, and of these 161 were struck off the register. The staff inspected 3,953 boilers in Bengal and found 127 of them out of order. The total receipts during the year amounted to Rs. 2,85,632, including Rs. 1,49,906 realised as fees for the inspection of boilers in Bengal.

Receipts and expenditure.

303. The total expenditure was Rs. 2,75,548, of which Rs. 1,41,781 was incurred on account of this Province. The corresponding figures in the previous year were Rs. 3,00,578 and Rs. 2,65,272 respectively.

Prosecutions.

304. Four prosecutions for offences under the Indian Boilers Act were instituted during the year. Of these, two cases ended in conviction, and two were pending at the close of the year. The Regulations for the control and inspection of steam boilers, which came into operation about two years ago, are working satisfactorily and are being enforced without undue friction or inconvenience to industry.

The Bengal Smoke Nuisances Commission.

Meetings and inspections.

305. The year under review saw further improvement in the reduction of the smoke nuisance. The Commission held 12 meetings during the year. The staff made 3,710 visits to factories, took 14,442 smoke observations, examined and approved 79 plans of new installations, disposed of 59 complaints, brought 2,759 minor offences to the notice of the owners, served 12 statutory warnings and instituted 5 prosecutions.

Smoke conditions.

306. General smoke conditions improved with the reduction of the emission of smoke which fell, in average figures, from 1·39 to 1·19 minutes per hour, the lowest figure yet attained. The installation of 646 motors aggregating 5,480 horse-power within the system of the Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation and the fitting of 1,220 gas appliances for domestic and industrial use also contributed to the reduction of atmospheric pollution.

Progress has also been made in the reduction of the discharge of solids such as soot, grit and ash by the installation of suitable appliances.

Working of the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1923 (VIII of 1923).

[Report on the working of the Workmen's Compensation Act in Bengal from 1st January to 31st December 1925.]

Disputes.

307. There was an appreciable increase in the number of applications for compensation during the year, due no doubt to the growing knowledge and appreciation of the provisions of the Act. Twenty-six applications were filed during the year, 12 by workmen and 14 by dependants of the deceased workmen, as against only one in the preceding six months. All except 4 of these cases were disposed of during the year. Two suits were instituted by a Railway Company against contractors, claiming to be indemnified for compensation paid by them to dependants of the contractors' workmen. These were pending at the close of the year.

Deposits.

308. Altogether 140 deposits, totalling Rs. 1,04,994-13-9, were received from employers as compensation under section 8 (*1*) and 8 (*2*) of the Act, and one case involving Rs. 720 as compensation was transferred from Rangoon. Of these, ten were deposits for injured workmen and the remainder for dependants. In five of these cases the money was refunded to the employers concerned, twelve of them were transferred to other Commissioners for disposal, and twenty-eight were pending at the end of the year. In accordance with a special arrangement made with the Director-General of Post Offices, accounts were opened by the Commissioner with the Post Office Savings Bank in the name of dependants under a legal disability, and a total sum of Rs. 19,932-8 was invested, including Rs. 3,740 which had been kept in deposit for investment from the previous year. Out of this sum Rs. 4,198-5-9 was withdrawn and paid during the year. One hundred and sixty-four memoranda of agreement were presented for registration during the year, as against 17 during the preceding six months; and of these only 6 were pending at the close of the year.

309. Steps were taken to secure accurate annual returns from employers, and the result was an improvement on the previous year. The returns showed the total number of workmen employed during the year to be 657,890, and the total sum paid as compensation to be Rs. 1,36,375. Accidents resulting in death numbered 120, in permanent disablement 204, and in temporary disablement 1,656, the compensation paid for each type of accident being, respectively, Rs. 74,845, Rs. 45,522 and Rs. 16,008. Compensation.

TRADE.

I.—Foreign Sea-borne Trade.

[Report on the Maritime Trade of Bengal for 1925-26.]

310. The aggregate value of the sea-borne trade of Bengal (excluding treasure), both of foreign and coasting, amounted during the year under review to Rs. 277 crores, or nearly 6 crores less than that of the previous year. Trade position.

In the foreign trade the value decreased from Rs. 243 crores to Rs. 238 crores. Imports declined from Rs. 90 crores to Rs. 84 crores, but exports showed an increase from Rs. 152 to Rs. 154 crores. The decline in the import trade is attributed mainly to the heavy falling off in the receipts from cotton piece-goods, but with this important exception the majority of the items recorded an improvement owing to lower prices caused by a higher and steadier exchange. A very large increase in the import of sugar was a special feature of the year, though its value was more than set off by the low price at which it was purchased. A rise in price was, however, recorded under kerosine, due to the importation of higher grade oils. On the export side tea did not do quite as well as in the preceding year and there was a decline in its prices. Coal and shellac continued depressed and lower prices were obtained for them as well as for cotton and linseed. The total value of raw jute and jute manufactures exceeded all previous records. The figures, however, it must be remembered, represent the value at the time of export and not necessarily the price actually paid for them. In fact, a large part of the exports was shipped under contracts which had been made at prices much lower than those ruling at the time of despatch. The violent fluctuations in prices destroyed much of the potential profits of the trade.

In the coasting trade the total fell from Rs. 41 crores to Rs. 39 crores, imports and exports declining roughly by Rs. 2 crores and Re. 1 crore, respectively.

Imports of Merchandise.

Principal articles of import.

311. The following table shows the comparative importance of the principal articles in the import trade of Calcutta. Articles which form less than ·5 per cent. of the total imports have been omitted from the list:—

	1924-25.	1925-26.	Percentage of proportion to total imports of merchandise.
	Rs.	Rs.	
Cotton goods	35,48,90,986	27,65,36,495	34·97
Metals and ores	9,71,68,074	10,15,35,747	12·84
Sugar	7,57,91,467	6,67,44,137	8·44
Machinery and mill work	4,39,95,802	4,46,89,559	5·65
Oils	3,89,69,547	4,15,21,860	5·25
Railway plant and rolling stock	3,00,09 327	2,19,68,164	2·78
Hardware, excluding cutlery and electroplated ware	1,65,86,961	1,81,69,154	2·30
Instruments, apparatus and appliances ..	1,33,17,387	1,46,41,435	1·85
Spices	1,17,35,385	1,44,62,990	1·83
Motor-cars, motor-cycles and parts thereof ..	99,90,780	1,31,54,758	1·66
Provisions and oilman's stores	1,05,30,563	1,03,34,868	1·30
Postal articles not specified	87,65,454	1,00,28,188	1·27
Liquors, including methylated and perfumed spirits	93,96,564	95,47,989	1·20
Glass and glassware	77,38,035	83,79,900	1·06
Paper and pasteboard	88,03,868	80,79,979	1·02
Chemicals and chemical preparations ..	80,78,779	79,78,654	1·01
Tobacco	75,69,641	75,10,603	·95
Salt	1,05,46,306	70,31,909	·89
Woollen goods	60,38,299	69,78,071	·88
Drugs and medicines (excluding chemicals and narcotics)	58,58,034	65,87,591	·83
Rubber	45,45,705	54,11,662	·81
Tea-chests, entire or in sections	67,57,219	61,69,353	·78
Paints and painters' materials	46,08,902	45,61,309	·58
Cycles (other than motor-cycles)	30,05,297	42,91,017	·54
Other articles	7,38,05,577	7,35,78,820	9·31
Total ..	86,83,03,959	79,08,84,178	100·00

The important items are separately dealt with in detail in the following paragraphs:—

Liquors.

312. The total imports of all descriptions of liquors amounted to 1,627,000 gallons as against 1,508,000 gallons in the preceding year, the total value increasing from Rs. 93·96 lakhs to Rs. 95·47 lakhs. There was an increase under whisky, brandy and methylated spirits, but imports of wine decreased. A reduction in the prices of British beers led to increased imports from the United Kingdom at the expense of German and Japanese brands, but a steady advance was noticed also in the receipts from the Netherlands.

Provisions.

313. The total value of provisions imported was nearly Rs. 2 lakhs less than that of the previous year, but in actual quantity there was an increase, notably in the case of farinaceous foods and condensed and evaporated milks, prices of which were considerably lower. The chief source of supply was the United Kingdom.

Sugar.

314. Imports of refined sugar (chiefly from Java) advanced from 244,491 tons, valued at Rs. 7,240·45 lakhs, to 314,475 tons, valued at Rs. 6.25·94 lakhs. The increase is attributed to the smaller yield of the Indian sugar as well as to a general fall in prices in other producing countries. Imports of unrefined sugar and beet sugar amounted to 401 tons and 2,115 tons, respectively, valued at Rs. ·71 lakhs and Rs. 5·21 lakhs, Hungary being the principal source of the latter. Imports of molasses, the price of which nearly fell to the pre-war level, amounted to 65,578 tons as against 53,124 tons in the previous year.

Salt.

315. Imports of salt declined by about 77,627 tons, despite the much lower level of prices. The quantity in bond fell from 90,753 tons at the beginning to 56,768 tons at the close of the year.

Tobacco.

316. Imports of tobacco advanced from 4,449,187 lbs., valued at Rs. 75·70 lakhs, to 8,793,709 lbs.; valued at Rs. 75·11 lakhs. The improvement was due mainly to the increased imports of cigarettes, the bulk of which came from the United Kingdom. Imports of other kinds of manufactured tobacco, a considerable proportion of which is used for the local manufacture of cigarettes, decreased. There was a decline also in the imports of unmanufactured tobacco.

Mineral oil.

317. The total quantity of mineral oil imported from all sources amounted to 116,022,355 gallons, valued at Rs. 7,56·58 lakhs, against 121,167,125 gallons, valued at Rs. 7,90·32 lakhs in 1924-25. A noticeable event of the year was the arrival of a cargo of oil from Batoum. There was a shrinkage in imports of kerosine both from Burma and America, but an expansion in the imports of lubricating and batching oils from Borneo. Increase was also recorded in the imports of fuel oil and German white oil. The demand created by the steady increase in motor traffic and the reduction of petrol prices led to an increased supply of petrol from Burma.

Motor vehicles.

318. The total number of motor-cars, motor-cycles and other motor vehicles (omnibuses, vans, lorries, etc.) imported during the year amounted to 3,853, 583 and 1,443, respectively, as against 2,957, 544 and 672 in the preceding year. Of these 1,510 motor-cars were supplied by Canada, 1,178 by the United States, 711 by the United Kingdom, 288 by Italy and 118 by France. In the heavier section 711 vehicles were imported from Canada, 518 from the United States and 186 from the United Kingdom. Imports of tyres and tubes advanced proportionately, and the British share in the trade increased.

Glassware and earthenware.

319. The total imports of glassware and earthenware showed a net increase of Rs. 6·73 lakhs, the most notable advance being in glass bangles, of which Japan, Czecho-Slovakia, Germany and

Austria were the principal suppliers. Imports of glass parts of lamps increased. Glass beads and false pearls declined in value by nearly Rs. 3 lakhs, but the total quantity showed an improvement. Glass-sheets and plates also showed a drop in total value by nearly Rs. 2 lakhs in spite of increase in quantity, the bulk of the trade coming from Belgium and the United Kingdom.

Machinery and railway materials.

320. Imports of machinery improved from Rs. 4,39·95 lakhs to Rs. 4,46·89 lakhs, the share of the United Kingdom in the trade being Rs. 3,83·46 lakhs. Boilers showed the largest increase, from Rs. 32·60 lakhs to Rs. 51·90 lakhs, but improvements also occurred in respect of type-writers, sewing and knitting machines, refrigerating and workshop and foundry machinery. A decline was, however, noticed under rice and flour mill and mining machinery and also under belting, the bulk of which came from the United Kingdom. Imports of railway plant and rolling stock declined from Rs. 3,90·14 lakhs to Rs. 3,68·19 lakhs. The United Kingdom took the first place in this trade with a share of Rs. 313·94 lakhs, followed by Belgium with Rs. 29·16 lakhs.

Metals and metal manufactures.

321. Imports of metals and metal manufactures showed an increase from 315,698 tons, valued at Rs. 7,13·40 lakhs, to 356,527 tons, valued at Rs. 7,51·91 lakhs. The principal features of the year were the increase in imports of galvanized sheets due to the prosperity of the tea industry, and the decrease in imports of bars, rods and tin plates as the result, probably, of the protective tariff. The prices of metals other than iron and steel did not decline as much as might have been expected and, on the other hand, in the case of tin there was a substantial rise. Increased quantities of unwrought iron were received chiefly from Germany and the United Kingdom. Supplies of copper braziers and sheets from Germany increased but those from the United Kingdom showed a decline. The United Kingdom was the chief supplier of brass and similar alloys, but the American trade in aluminium advanced at the expense of the British.

Paper and paste-board.

322. The total imports of paper and paste-board increased from 424,596 cwts., valued at Rs. 88 lakhs, to 437,459 cwts., valued at Rs. 80 lakhs. In the case of writing papers it was only on the cheaper brands that the duty imposed during the year exercised a protective effect. On the more expensive brands its incidence was lighter than that of the *ad valorem* duty which ruled previously. The result was that there was a slight fall in the quantity imported, while the average price, despite the higher exchange, increased.

Cotton manufactures.

323. The trade in cotton goods was greatly depressed during the year, imports of piece-goods showed a decline from 904,970,654 yards to 766,262,851 yards, while the value dropped from

Rs. 31,56·43 lakhs to Rs. 24,33·07 lakhs. The decrease occurred both in grey and white goods, but an improvement was noticed in the imports of coloured and printed piece-goods. The United Kingdom, as usual, dominated the market in all varieties. Japan competed successfully with the Lancashire and Indian mills in the coarser styles of grey goods and in the coloured and fancy goods trade made great headway, while Italy and Germany were successful in replacing certain kinds of Fustian cloths from Lancashire by a coarser stuff made from an admixture of waste cotton and waste wool. The fall in average prices was mainly due to the rise in exchange, while the high price of raw cotton prevented any substantial reduction in the prices of the Lancashire products.

Imports of twist and yarn decreased from 16 million lbs. to 14 million lbs. in quantity and from Rs. 258·65 lakhs to Rs. 192·39 lakhs in value. The drop was due mainly to the competition of Indian products. Moreover, a quantity of Indian mill-made cloth was thrown on the market at a sacrifice, thereby reducing the demand for handloom-made cloth and hence for imports of cotton yarns.

Woollen goods.

324. The steady decline in the price of woollen goods had a stimulating effect on trade during the year, imports from the United Kingdom increasing in value from Rs. 36 lakhs to Rs. 38 lakhs. Germany, Italy and Belgium also increased their supplies.

Silk and artificial silk goods.

325. Artificial silk piece-goods constitute the bulk of the business under this head, the trade in pure silk piece-goods in Bengal being of trivial dimensions. There was an increase in the imports of artificial silk piece-goods from Germany and Czecho-Slovakia, but a decrease of imports from the United Kingdom, Italy, Switzerland and Belgium.

Other imports.

326. Of other articles hardware recorded the greatest value, advancing from Rs. 1·66 lakhs to Rs. 1·82 lakhs. The share of the United Kingdom in this trade decreased, while that of Germany and Japan increased. Imports of instruments, apparatus and appliances, consisting chiefly of electrical instruments from the United Kingdom, increased from Rs. 1·33 lakhs to Rs. 1·46 lakhs. A marked recovery in imports of betel-nuts from the Straits Settlements raised the total value for spices. The demand for tea-chests dropped from Rs. 68 lakhs to Rs. 62 lakhs. Imports of paints and painters' materials were almost on a level with the previous year's figure (Rs. 46 lakhs), the United Kingdom securing the bulk of the trade. Germany made a small advance, but Japan and the United States lost ground. There were larger imports of asphalt, tiles and other kinds of building materials, except cement which fell from Rs. 21 lakhs to Rs. 14 lakhs in value. The local match industry continued to expand, and purchases of the foreign article decreased still further from Rs. 32

lakhs to Rs. 26 lakhs; the imports from Japan declined by Rs. 14 lakhs in value, while Sweden increased her share by Rs. 7 lakhs.

Import trade of Chittagong.

327. The total value of imports from foreign countries decreased from Rs. 1,06·16 lakhs to Rs. 1,00·30 lakhs. The United Kingdom supplied 83 per cent. of this trade.

Export of Merchandise.

Principal articles of export.

328. Exports of Indian merchandise from the port of Calcutta advanced from Rs. 141 crores to Rs. 145·5 crores. The comparative importance of the principal articles exported from Calcutta is shown in the following table:—

	1924-25.	1925-26.	Percentage of proportion to total merchandise reported.
	Rs.	Rs.	
Jute manufactures	51,60,82,933	58,74,43,517	40·38
Jute, raw	22,45,01,419	35,99,44,988	24·5
Tea	22,18,46,188	17,70,59,924	12·17
Lac	7,53,89,058	6,87,59,289	4·73
Hides and skins, raw	4,82 30,007	4,85,04,368	3·34
Seeds	5,64,06,280	4,32,50,300	2·97
Grain pulse and flour	7,78,66,207	3,83,69,914	2·64
Metals and ores	3,23,04,832	2,75,17,899	1·89
Opium	1 ,47,22,355	1,93,36,715	1·33
Hemp, raw	1,09,64,941	1,04,45,430	·72
Mica	88,92,287	91,08,376	·62
Cotton, raw	1,29,13,252	85,23,486	·58
Oil-cakes	58,88,571	59,64,713	·41
Manures	54,21,642	54,87,550	·38
Postal articles	58,31,437	51,48,348	·35
Dyeing and tanning substances	48,05,607	47,42,054	·33
Spices	26,38,626	36,73,809	·25
Woollen manufactures	48,17,956	35,76,773	·25
Coal, coke and patent fuel	37,49,617	34,72,371	·24
Provisions and oilman's stores	27,81,739	26,35,065	·18
Oils	22,22,804	21,63,917	·15
Apparel (excluding hosiery, boots and shoes) ..	20,18,521	19,05,373	·13
Saltpetre	25,87,593	18,26,781	·13
Drugs and medicines	13,18,574	16,05 331	·11
Kapok	12,80,455	15,77,373	·11
Tobacco	24,39,272	11,52,007	·08
Cordage and rope	9,36,506	10,77,604	·07
Instruments	2,63,684	10,07,113	·07
Paraffin wax	6,58,801	8,75,744	·06
Bristles	9,16,911	7,96,459	·05
Leather	9,17,616	7,37,473	·05
Fruits and vegeta bles	7,98,033	7,11,508	·05
Animals, living	7,48,057	6,85,832	·05
Silk, raw	7,16,066	6,25,302	·04
Fodder and bran	5,93,479	5,22,251	·04
Tea waste	4,65,12 ,	5,11,340	·04
Other articles	44,14,207	37,53,135	·26
Total Indian merchandise	1,40,93,80,659	1,45,45,49,487	100·00
Total Foreign merchandise re-exported ..	69,46,275	56,90,092	....
. Total merchandise ..	1,41,63,27,134	1,46,02,39,579	....

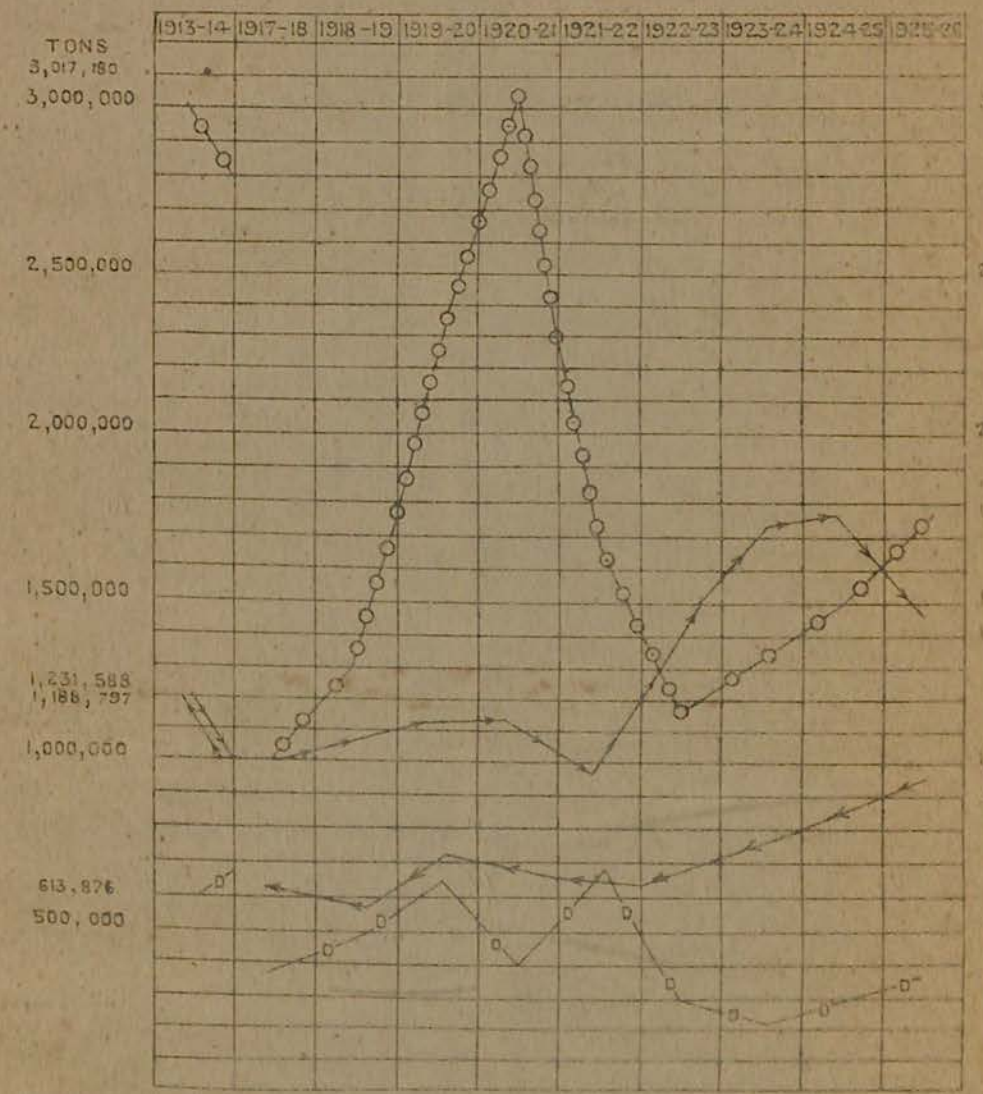
Grain, pulse and flour.

329. Bengal suffered a set-back in her foreign rice trade. The total quantity shipped from Calcutta contracted by 56 per cent., from 323,561 tons to 143,466 tons, while the value, owing to better prices obtained, dropped by 50 per cent., from Rs. 605 lakhs to

DIAGRAM SHOWING TONNAGE OF GOODS HANDLED AT THE JETTIES & DOCKS

DURING THE TEN YEARS 1913-14 & 1917-18 TO 1925-26.

EXPORTS AND IMPORTS



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COAL EXPORTS

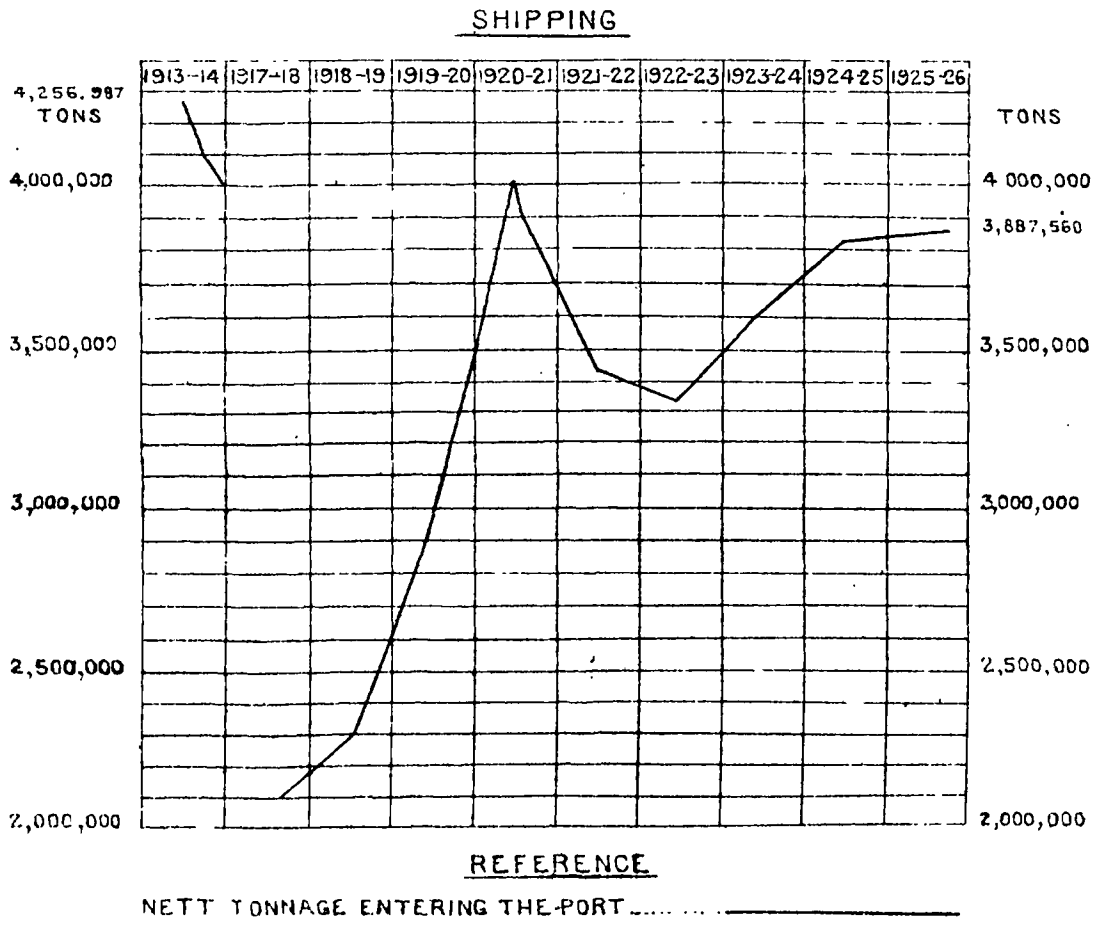
GENERAL EXPORTS

JETTY IMPORTS

DOCK IMPORTS

133062

DIAGRAM SHOWING TONNAGE OF SHIPPING ENTERING THE PORT DURING THE TEN YEARS 1913–14 & 1917–18 TO 1925–26.



Rs. 301 lakhs. The rise in prices caused by the increased local demand due to a poor Indian wheat crop made competition with Burma and Siam rice in sales to Ceylon almost impossible. In the export trade of wheat Calcutta's share was even smaller than usual and would have been insignificant, had not facility of freight permitted the shipment of 4,473 tons to the United Kingdom as against only 564 tons in 1924-25. There was some improvement in the exports of oats owing to increased demands from Ceylon. Shipments of barley, however, decreased, Germany, Belgium and the United Kingdom having reduced their indents. Exports of wheat flour also declined, there being practically no shipments to Mauritius and Asiatic Turkey.

330. The total exports of tea declined from 220 million lbs., valued at Rs. 22,18·46 lakhs, to 208 million lbs., valued at Rs. 17,70·60 lakhs. In the earlier months of the year production was ahead of that of the previous year, the excess of the Northern Indian crop reaching a figure of 21½ million lbs. in July. In many quarters pessimism prevailed, and although a discriminating market had necessitated careful plucking with a consequent loss of crop, a scheme of limitation was decided on. Added to this, the abnormal weather conditions during the latter half of the season affected the crop adversely and the shortage of labour forced many estates to leave considerable areas out of the plucking round. The season, in consequence, finished in Northern India with a crop of 312½ million lbs., as compared with 327¾ million lbs. in 1924. The average quantity for the season was below the standard of the last five years and the average price lower than that of the previous year. To lighten heavy stocks in London there was a considerable decrease in despatches during the year, but a satisfactory increase was noticed in the shipments to Russia and China. Tea.

331. The exports of coal to foreign countries amounted to 240,224 tons, valued at Rs. 34·58 lakhs, as compared with 228,117 tons, valued at Rs. 37·15 lakhs in the preceding year, the total trade (foreign and coasting) amounting to 2,047,529 tons, valued at Rs. 3,03·96 lakhs, as against 1,918,964 tons, valued at Rs. 3,13·69 lakhs, in the year 1924-25. In pursuance of the recommendations of the Committee appointed by the Government of India in 1924 for the protection of the industry, the Railway Companies have further reduced their freight rates and increased their rebates, the Port Trust have reduced their river dues and dumping charges and a Grading Board has been established to certify the coal for export. The coal trade has, however, hardly yet reached the state of convalescence. Coal.

Lac.

332. Exports of lac increased in bulk from 428,139 cwts. to 536,032 cwts., but decreased in value from Rs. 7,53·89 lakhs to Rs. 6,87·59 lakhs, owing chiefly to the fall in prices.

Hides and skins.

333. After a slight recovery in the previous two years, shipments of raw hides to Germany again dropped to about half the pre-war figure, although the average price per cwt. was only Rs. 67 as against Rs. 81 in 1913-14. Heavier shipments to other countries did not make up the loss and the total value of exports of raw hides decreased from Rs. 2,84·65 lakhs to Rs. 2,60·46 lakhs. Exports of raw skins improved from Rs. 1,96·14 lakhs to Rs. 2,22·92 lakhs, owing to larger purchases by the United States, and the total trade both as regards bulk and average price was at about pre-war level.

Metals and ores.

334. The quantity of pig-iron exported advanced from 340,171 to 380,762 tons, but owing to the fall in prices the value declined from Rs. 2·16 lakhs to Rs. 1·75 lakhs. Exports to the United States showed an increase of 22,899 tons, but Japan reduced her purchases by 3,426 tons. Shipments of manganese ore dropped from 326,399 tons, valued at Rs. 94·62 lakhs, to 269,584 tons, valued at Rs. 81·73 lakhs, the decline being most noticeable in the exports to the United Kingdom. Shipments of ferro-manganese improved from 1,567 to 1,583 tons.

Mica.

335. The total export of mica advanced from 71,658 cwts., valued at Rs. 88·92 lakhs, to 86,532 cwts., valued at Rs. 91·08 lakhs. Shipments of *block* mica increased in quantity, but the value fell partly owing to a demand for poorer qualities from the United States of America and partly to a general decline in prices. Splittings formed the bulk of the trade, expanding both in quantity and value. The United States were the chief purchasers followed by the United Kingdom and Germany. Of the smaller customers, there was a marked increase in purchases by Canada and a falling off in orders from Japan.

Oilseeds and vegetable oils.

336. The total quantity of oilseeds of all kinds exported during the year amounted to 168,752 tons, valued at Rs. 4,27·34 lakhs, as against 219,733 tons, valued at Rs. 5,57·31 lakhs. The decline was due to increased cultivation of linseed by European countries, which were able not only to restrict their indents on India but also to ship large quantities of linseed oil to the United Kingdom, in competition with the home oil crushing industry. Shipments of other descriptions of oilseeds were even poorer than in the previous year, France being the only country to repeat her orders for rape seeds. Exports of

vegetable oil from Calcutta are still insignificant, amounting during the year to 768,829 gallons, as compared with 789,138 gallons in the preceding year.

The bulk of oil-cakes exported consisted of rape and sesamum cakes shipments of which, mostly to Japan, declined by nearly 3,000 tons. Linseed cake was next in importance, the demand increasing from 7,790 tons to 9,073 tons, nearly all as in the previous year being taken by the United Kingdom.

Jute and jute manufactures.

337. The total value of jute and jute products exported during the year showed a record rise, but this increase did not prove an altogether unmixed blessing. Calcutta prices for " first marks " were Rs. 106 per bale in the first week of April 1925 and rose in the same month to Rs. 118. News of increased sowing then filtered through and prices receded till, with the issue of the preliminary forecast in July estimating on an increase in area of 6·50 per cent. over the previous year, it was as low as Rs. 90 per bale in September. But hopes of a larger crop were rudely dispelled in September, when the final forecast estimated the yield at only 78 lakhs of bales, as compared with 81 lakhs in the previous year. The immediate result of this unexpected disparity between the two forecasts was almost chaotic. Buyers who had sat on the fence hoping for a fall in prices and mills with depleted stocks were caught unawares and prices soared in a panic-stricken market, at times to heights at which hardly any business was done. By the end of October the highest rate for the year, Rs. 136 per bale, was reached. Later, when according to the official forecast stocks should have been exhausted, supplies continued to come in, prices collapsed and the year closed with a lifeless market. The unsteadiness of prices was a source of heavy loss to many and, in fact, a large proportion of goods was shipped under contracts made at much lower prices than those ruling at the time of export. The United Kingdom increased her purchase of raw jute from 8 lakhs of bales, valued at Rs. 601 lakhs, to 8¼ lakhs of bales, valued at Rs. 9·29 lakhs, displacing Germany, who had in the previous year been the greatest consumer. Increased purchases were made also by France. Shipments to the United States and Brazil also showed some increase, but those to Japan and China declined. A special feature of the year was the receipt of large orders for yarns, European countries finding it frequently more profitable to buy than to spin.

Shipments of gunny bags increased from 423 millions, valued at Rs. 23,11·18 lakhs, to 424 millions, valued at Rs. 26,66·40 lakhs. In spite of higher prices, gunny bags continued to be in

strong demand. Shipment of hessian bags were smaller, though better prices raised their total value and the loss in tonnage was more than balanced by heavier despatches of sacking bags. Australia continued to be the largest buyer, followed by Cuba and Java. There was an improvement in the trade with the United States, the United Kingdom, the Straits Settlements and the Cape of Good Hope, but a decline in the same with Hawaii, Chili and Peru. The trade in gunny cloth was well maintained, and there was a marked increase in exports to the United States who took nearly three-fourths of the total trade. In spite of her embarrassments, larger purchases were made by China, but Canada, the Argentine and the United Kingdom reduced their orders.

Opium.

338. Shipments on Government account decreased from 3,591 to 2,699 chests, of which 1,950 went to the Straits Settlements, 335 to the United Kingdom (Medical opium), 225 to Hongkong, 144 to British Borneo and 45 to Ceylon. Shipments on private account increased, although exports to Persia were stopped. Except for 1,545 chests to Indo-China and 125 to Japan, the balance of 5,637 chests, or 77 per cent., were consigned direct to the Governments of the importing countries. The shipments to Indo-China and Japan were covered by certificates from their Governments approving of them as being for legitimate purposes. An agreement having been concluded for direct sales of opium between the Governments of India and French Indo-China, public auction sales which used to be held in Calcutta were discontinued: all exports in future will be on Government account, except for the quantities already purchased and remaining in bond for export, which amounted at the close of the year to 190 chests.

Saltpetre.

339. There was a decrease in the export of saltpetre from 159,320 cwts., valued at Rs. 25·88 lakhs, to 125,514 cwts., valued at Rs. 18·27 lakhs. The largest quantity was despatched to Ceylon who increased her purchase from 62,854 cwts., valued at Rs. 7·76 lakhs, to 75,012 cwts., valued at Rs. 8·77 lakhs.

Dyeing and tanning substances including indigo.

340. The total export trade in these articles showed no recovery and declined further from 23,597 to 23,154 tons, the value dropping from Rs. 48·05 lakhs to Rs. 47·42 lakhs. Myrobolan continued to form the bulk of the trade. The United States bought the largest quantity and increased their orders from 4,184 to 7,943 tons, the United Kingdom was the second largest buyer and made a small advance in her purchase. Shipments to Germany, France and the Netherlands declined, but there

was an improvement in exports to Japan and Belgium. Shipments of myrobolan extract declined further, and the exports of indigo decreased by 1,200 cwts. in quantity and Rs. 4·81 lakhs in value. There was a marked revival in shipments of cutch and gambier and of safflower, but the demand for turmeric fell off.

Cotton and cotton manufacture.

341. The yield of the cotton crop of India for 1924-25 was 16 per cent. better than in the previous year. Bengal's share in the trade of raw cotton has always been small, and in the year under report it declined from 8,241 tons to 7,032 tons, chiefly due to smaller shipments to Japan. The United States, Germany, France and Belgium took larger supplies from Calcutta, but the United Kingdom took less, and there were no exports to China owing to her disturbed condition. With China practically out of the market and the Straits Settlements reducing their demand, there was a collapse in the exports of twist and yarn. There were, however, larger shipments to New South Wales and the inter-portal trade was fairly well maintained. Production of yarn by the Bengal mills decreased from 25·67 million lbs. to 24·12 million lbs.

Hemp.

342. The export of hemp declined from 452,042 to 417,477 cwts., and the value from Rs. 109·65 to Rs. 104·45 lakhs, due probably to the high prices which prevailed. Exports to the United States increased from 11,530 to 54,571 cwts., but Belgium, the United Kingdom and Germany, the principal customers, reduced their purchases. There was further decline in shipments to France and Italy.

Other articles.

343. Among other articles of export the most important was manures, which advanced in value from Rs. 54·22 lakhs to Rs. 54·88 lakhs. Bones formed the bulk of this trade and larger orders were received from Belgium. The export of sulphate of ammonia dropped in value from Rs. 19 lakhs to Rs. 8 lakhs, Spain having taken nothing and orders from Ceylon having contracted considerably. Spices were in better demand from Ceylon and the Straits Settlements. Exports of wool manufacture decreased from Rs. 48 lakhs to Rs. 36 lakhs, the United Kingdom reducing her orders, for carpets and rugs from Rs. 42 lakhs to Rs. 31 lakhs. The marked drop in the value of the export of tobacco was due to much smaller demand for unmanufactured tobacco from the Netherlands and Belgium. Re-exports of raw wool, owing chiefly to smaller shipments to the United Kingdom, dropped from Rs. 23 lakhs to Rs. 16 lakhs and lowered the total value of all articles of foreign merchandise re-exported.

Foreign exports from Chittagong.

344. Exports from Chittagong to foreign countries declined from Rs. 9,50·59 lakhs to Rs. 7,32·18 lakhs, due to smaller shipments of tea. Shipments of jute, however, increased by nearly Rs. 12 lakhs.

Distribution of export and import trade of Calcutta.

345. The following tables show the distribution of the import and export trade of Calcutta:—

Import (Merchandise).

	Average for the 3 years ending 1921-22.		1924-25.		1925-26.	
	Rs. (lakhs).	Per cent.	Rs. (lakhs).	Per cent.	Rs. (lakhs).	Per cent.
United Kingdom ..	62,65	61·30	55,01	63·35	47,44	59·98
British Possessions ..	5,17	5·26	4,29	4·94	4,79	6·06
United States.. ..	11,22	11·13	5,07	5·83	4,91	6·20
Germany	81	·80	3,54	4·07	3,51	4·44
France	54	·50	52	0·59	73	0·92
Belgium	1,23	1·10	1,74	2·00	1,51	1·91
Italy	68	·60	93	1·07	96	1·22
Japan	5,47	5·40	4,66	5·36	4,85	6·14
Java	9,96	10·23	7,18	8·26	6,63	8·38
South America ..	1	·02	....	....	....	....
Total (including other countries)	1,01,16	100	86,83	100	79,09	100

Export (Merchandise).

	Average for the 3 years ending 1921-22.		1924-25.		1925-26.	
	Rs. (lakhs).	Per cent.	Rs. (lakhs).	Per cent.	Rs. (lakhs).	Per cent.
United Kingdom ..	28,73	25·73	35,71	25·20	34,03	23·30
British Possessions ..	14,02	12·93	20,50	14·47	19,68	13·48
United States ..	31,95	28·80	29,53	20·84	33,49	22·9
Germany	2,95	3·10	12,01	8·47	10,93	7·49
France . ..	4,50	3·93	5,34	3·76	7,12	4·88
Belgium	2,38	2·10	4,45	3·14	3,59	2·46
Italy	1,50	3·33	3,27	2·30	3,82	2·62
Japan	5,03	4·63	4,29	3·02	3,69	2·52
Java	1,96	1·80	1,84	1·29	3,03	2·08
South America ..	6,81	6·00	8,04	5·67	9,52	6·52
Total (including other countries)	1,09,82	100	1,41,63	100	1,46,02	100

346. The total trade of the United Kingdom with Calcutta amounted to Rs. 81,46·93 lakhs, as against Rs. 90,72·59 lakhs in 1924-25. The decrease was almost wholly due to the falling off in the imports of cotton manufactures from the United Kingdom, the trade in the majority of other articles being well maintained. Imports of railway materials on private account declined owing to the transfer of the East Indian Railway to Government, but this loss was covered by improved sales in metals, principally iron and steel, and also in tobacco, apparel, motor-cars, cycles, instruments, soap, jewellery, manures, boots and shoes and articles imported by post. On the export side, while most items showed a poorer trade with the United Kingdom, the decline in the total value was principally due to smaller shipments of tea at lower prices, resulting in a drop of Rs. 423 lakhs. There were also decreases in the value of grain and pulse, lac, seeds (chiefly linseed), carpets and rugs and raw hemp. Raw jute and jute manufactures were the only items of export which showed market increases in value, but in both these cases the improvement was due to the exceptionally high prices ruling during the greater part of the year. **United Kingdom.**

The share of the United Kingdom in the grand total of Calcutta's trade declined further from 39·71 per cent. to 36·19 per cent. during the year.

347. With the exception of Mauritius and Hongkong, imports from all the overseas territories of the British Empire showed an improvement. The Straits Settlements sent heavier shipments of betel-nuts and Canada of motor-car tyres and tubes, while in Australian imports wheat counterbalanced the decline in raw wool. There were smaller imports of salt from Aden, but much larger receipts of mineral oil from British Borneo raised the total value for other overseas territories. There were larger shipments of gunny bags at greatly enhanced prices to Australia, the Straits Settlements and the Union of South Africa. Canada took less tea, and there were reduced exports of rice to Ceylon, Mauritius and the British West Indies. **British Empire.**

348. The value of imports from Germany was about the same as in the previous year, but the value of exports declined from Rs. 12,02 lakhs to Rs. 10,93 lakhs, still being above the pre-war average of Rs. 9,10 lakhs. Iron and steel imported from Germany dropped from Rs. 57 lakhs to Rs. 34 lakhs. Imports of cotton goods, paper, aniline dyes, cutlery, apparel, haberdashery and millinery and railway materials also declined, but there was an increase in hardware, copper, machinery, white oil, woollen goods, chemicals, glass-ware, drugs, medicines, umbrella fittings, toys, pulp of wood, stationery and other small items. High prices **Germany.**

reduced the quantity of raw jute taken by Germany from 187,018 to 140,707 tons, though the value increased from Rs. 7,87 lakhs to Rs. 7,93 lakhs. There were small increases in raw cotton, gunny cloth and mica exports, but the demand for Indian raw hides, lac, grain and pulses and oilseeds, raw hemp, myrobolans and gunny bags showed a decline.

France. 349. France was the only country in Europe whose trade with Calcutta increased notably. The improvement in imports was effected principally in iron, steel, motor-cars, tyres, tube, woollen goods, and champagne. The advance in exports from Rs. 5,35 lakhs to Rs. 7,12 lakhs was due chiefly to the increased shipments of raw jute which rose in value from Rs. 3,35 lakhs to Rs. 5,25 lakhs. Improvement was also recorded in linseed, hides and skins, manganese ore, raw silk and raw hemp, but there were marked decreases in raw cotton and lac.

Belgium. 350. The trade of Belgium with Calcutta fell from Rs. 1,74 lakhs to Rs. 1,51 lakhs, due mainly to the decline in imports of iron and steel.

Italy. 351. Italy did better business in motor-cars, cotton, twist and yarn, haberdashery and millinery, machinery and marble, purchased larger quantities of raw jute from Calcutta, but reduced her demands for hides and skins, linseed, raw cotton and raw hemp.

Austria. 352. Austrian imports are still small, increases under paper and paste-board, hardware and German silver being discounted by decreases under glassware, sugar and cotton manufactures.

Russia. 353. Russia sent some Rs. 6 lakhs worth of kerosine and took more tea and raw jute.

Other countries of Europe. 354. As regards other countries in Europe, increases in supplies of matches and paper and paste-board from Sweden, wood-pulp from Norway, cheese and vegetable fat from the Netherlands, salt from Spain and wine from Portugal contributed to the improved value of imports, while smaller purchases of raw hides by Sweden, raw hides, raw jute and jute manufactures by Norway, goat skins, linseed and manufactured tobacco by the Netherlands and jute manufactures by European Turkey reduced the total value of the exports.

Java. 355. Java sent more sugar, but the fall in price reduced the total value. On account of her large sugar crop, she had to increase her orders for gunny bags, and the very high prices ruling raised the total value of this trade.

Japan. 356. Japan made larger sales of cotton goods, glassware, hardware, toys and logs for match-making, but her total purchases showed sharp contraction due to much reduced orders for

pig iron, raw cotton, lac and rape seed. The improvement in the value of raw jute purchased by Japan was due to the prevailing high prices and not to any increase in the quantity taken.

Other countries of Asia and Egypt.

357. China purchased more tea from India, and Indo-China and Siam increased their demand for opium. There was an improvement in shipments of rice to Arabia. There was a decline in the trade with Egypt who sent less salt and took reduced shipments of linseed and gunny bags.

United States.

358. The United States failed to maintain their sales of kerosine and lubricating oils, tobacco, tinned sheets and plates at the high level of the previous year, and the total value of the import trade fell from Rs. 5,07 lakhs to Rs. 4,91 lakhs. Exports to the United States again advanced from Rs. 29,53 lakhs to Rs. 33,49 lakhs, decreases in purchases of lac, pig iron, tea, mica and raw wool being more than covered by increases in value of raw jute, gunny bags and cloth and goat skins.

South America.

359. There were no imports from South America, but the export recorded a further advance from Rs. 8,05 to Rs. 9,52 lakhs and was due to increased demand for raw jute, gunny cloth and gunny bags.

II.—Coasting Trade.

[Report on the Maritime Trade of Bengal for 1925-26.]

Imports.

360. The trade of Calcutta with other ports of India declined from Rs. 35,63·81 lakhs to Rs. 30,01·81 lakhs in value. The decrease in the total value of imports from Rs. 19,71·81 lakhs to Rs. 15,42·97 lakhs was due to the poor value of the shipments from Bombay; her Indian cotton manufactures, chiefly grey piece-goods, declining from Rs. 6,74 lakhs to Rs. 2,02 lakhs, and cotton twist and yarn from Rs. 1,13 lakhs to Rs. 36 lakhs. Imports of mineral oil from Burma decreased in value, but she maintained her premier position in the coasting trade by increasing her sales of teak, rice and paddy. An increased business in cotton twist and yarn and raw cotton was done by Madras, but there was a decrease in her trade in cocoanut oil. Rice imported from Bihar and Orissa was less in value than in the previous year.

Exports.

361. Shipments of jute manufactures which formed the most important constituent of the export trade advanced from Rs. 4,27 lakhs to Rs. 5,08 lakhs. The exports of gunny bags showed an increase, Burma taking the largest quantity, while those of gunny cloth declined owing to a heavy reduction in orders from Bombay. Shipments of coal advanced from 1,001,071 tons to 1,139,577 tons, Burma, Bombay and Sind increasing their demands. Exports of betel-nuts which went chiefly to Burma rose in value, while exports of cotton twist and yarn declined considerably.

Owing to reduced demands from Madras, shipments of rice showed great decrease. Exports of *ghee* improved a bit, but those of tobacco unmanufactured and tea declined heavily.

Public Works.

Buildings and Roads.

Revenue and expenditure.

362. The revenue realised during the year amounted to Rs. 6·91 lakhs, of which Rs. 5·82 lakhs were provincial. The expenditure totalled Rs. 136·82 lakhs, including about Rs. 19,91 lakhs for Establishment, Tools and Plant. Of the total expenditure, Rs. 11·62 lakhs were for Central Works, Rs. 23·08 lakhs for Provincial Works (Reserved) and Rs. 92·66 lakhs for Provincial Works (Reserved A). Rupees 6·88 lakhs were expended on contribution works and Rs. 2·58 lakhs on grants-in-aid.

Central buildings.

363. At the Salt Golahs, Sulkea, the work of dividing up the 23 golahs was completed. The construction of 4 *kutcha* golahs in the compound of the New Salt Golahs at Chittagong was in progress. The work of providing a drinking water-supply to the Salt Golahs at Moheshkhal was completed. In the Treasury Buildings, Calcutta, certain additions and alterations and rearrangement of racks and counters were carried out to relieve congestion and to provide sufficient accommodation for the Record and Pension Sections of the office of the Accountant-General, Bengal. At the Port and Shipping office, Calcutta, the old latrine was dismantled and a new one with up-to-date sanitary fittings constructed on the site. Additions and alterations to the Post Office at Comilla were in progress.

Provincial buildings.

364. A sum of Rs. 55·25 lakhs was expended under the "Transferred" head, including Rs. ·006 lakhs on English stores, and Rs. 7·10 lakhs under the "Reserved" head.

Education buildings accounted for Rs. 12·87 lakhs, buildings in connection with General Administration Rs. 11·01 lakhs and buildings relating to Administration of Justice, Police, Medical, Jails and other Civil Works Rs. 38·47 lakhs.

Of the several buildings completed, the more important ones were sub-registry offices at Hasnabad and Jalpaiguri; double-storied quadruple munsifi at Perojpur; a new sub-jail at Patuakhali; section buildings for the Police Department at Kalighat, Bhowanipore and Kapalitola; the residence of the Assistant Superintendent of Police at Asansol; new Police Lines at Khulna; Muhammadan hostel for the Barasat Government School; Demonstration school, hostel, etc., for the David Hare Training College at Ballygunge; a barrack for Anglo-Indian students at

the Bengal Engineering College, Sibpur; Boiler House and Industrial Research Laboratory at the Research Tannery, Tangra; Guru-Training Schools at Midnapore, Suri and Patuakhali; a Hindu hostel for the Rajshahi College; new nurses' quarters at the Presidency General Hospital, Bhownipore; Medical School at Mymensingh; Veterinary Hospital at Dacca; Agricultural Farm Buildings at Dinajpur and Goalchamut; the office of the Executive Engineer at Barisal and Bengal Land Survey School at Mainamati. Additions and alterations to the Alms House, Calcutta, were carried out in order to convert it into a Police Section House. The work of providing water-supply to the Central Jail at Midnapore was completed.

The following works were in course of construction:—

the Islamia College, Calcutta;
the munsifis at Serampore, Munishiganj, Chandpur, Chikandi, Rajbari and Bhola;
the Guru-Training Schools at Amtola (Howrah), Krishnagar and Berhampore;
the hostel for the Ronaldshay Medical School at Burdwan;
the Subdivisional Court buildings at Siliguri and Gopalganj;
the barrack in the Police Lines at Jalpaiguri for 30 married constables;
the Muhammadan hostel for the Rajshahi College;
the Agricultural Farm buildings at Mainaguri, Malda and Rangamati;
the new Dormitory building at the Dow Hill Girls' School, Kurseong;
the office of the Deputy Director of Agriculture at Dacca; and
the Collegiate School and the Muhammadan hostel at Chittagong.

Considerable progress was made in the construction of the Civil Station at Alipur Duars. The extension of the Law Court buildings at Chittagong was in progress. The construction of a slipway at Narainganj on the Angus Press property, recently purchased, was taken in hand but had to be stopped, owing to the difficulty experienced in driving piles and the nature of the sub-soil encountered. A revised design and estimate are now under preparation.

Communications.

365. The total expenditure on communications during the year under review was Rs. 36,92,255, out of which Rs. 90,141 was spent by the Government of India on Central Communications.

The total length of metalled roads in the Province rose from 3,363 to 3,410 miles and the length of unmetalled roads from 33,708 to 34,273 miles. These figures include 2,496 miles of metalled and 33,557 miles of unmetalled roads maintained by district and local funds, but exclude roads maintained by municipalities.

The improvement of the Calcutta Maidan roads to make them more suitable for modern traffic conditions received the careful attention of Government, and several roads were resurfaced with tar and pitch macadam during the year.

The improvement of the Grand Trunk Road from the Tramway Terminus in Howrah to Bally Bridge from mile 7⅞ to mile 19⅝ was in progress.

The construction of a 6-feet road from Rangamati to Waggashura leading to Chandraghona was started, and work done up to an amount of Rs. 26,806 against an estimate of Rs. 37,209.

The work of constructing a bridge over the Haridaspur Khal in the 27th mile of the Calcutta-Jessore Road was in progress.

Special repairs to the roads in the Darjeeling district were practically completed during the year, and the work of dismantling and replacing five wooden bridges in the Terai by steel and concrete bridges capable of carrying a steam road-roller was taken up and completed in 3 cases. A suspension bridge, 90 feet long, over the Merong River between Kagey and Pedong in the Government Estates at Kalimpong and the Balasun Bridge were finished. Improvement of the Rishi Road from Tista to Kalimpong and the construction of a suspension bridge over the Relli River were also in progress.

The construction of the road from Mainaguri to Dhupguri was far advanced during the year. This forms the last of the projects to be carried out under the Duars Road scheme, the cost of which will be borne entirely by Government. The training of the Jaldhaka River which delayed the construction of the bridge for three years was completed prior to the rains of 1924, and has successfully kept the river in the desired channel. Under the scheme for road improvement in the Duars (the Cumming scheme), further road construction is to be taken up on condition that the tea industry contributes one-half of the first cost. Messrs. Duncan Bros. approached Government with a request to metal, on that condition, the last 2¼ miles of the road from Jainti to the Dhowla. The work was taken up during the year. The construction of a new road from Alipore to Rajabhatikhawa was also sanctioned and the work taken in hand. As regards repairs, the work

on the Dimdima Bridge was continued, 7 wooden bridges of spans varying from 10 feet to 40 feet were replaced by permanent structures, while work was in progress on 13 more.

366. Arboricultural operations along roads were carried out as far as funds permitted. Arboriculture.

367. The establishment of the office of the Consulting Architect, Bengal, was created temporarily in 1909. This, together with a part of the establishment of the Drawing Branch of this office, worked for the Consulting Architect and his Assistant. This dual arrangement proved unsatisfactory. A portion of the staff (both permanent and temporary) of the Drawing Branch of the Chief Engineer's office was transferred to the office of the Consulting Architect whose office establishment was now placed on a permanent and pensionable footing. Establishment.

In 1920 the Government of India sanctioned combined cadre of Assistant Engineers for both the Irrigation and Roads and Buildings Branches of the Public Works Department of this Province. The two branches having been separated, this combined cadre has been split up, and a separate cadre for the Roads and Buildings Branch has been fixed at 44. The cadre of the Subordinate Engineering Service, which had been uncertain so long owing to a possible reduction in consequence of the recommendations of the Bengal Retrenchment Committee, was fixed at 112.

The Government of India notified, on 1st April 1926, the resolutions passed by the Secretary of State, delegating power to local Governments to frame rules under section 96B of the Government of India Act, with a view to their exercising full control of their provincial and subordinate services and of officers holding special posts. The framing of the necessary rules, so far as this Department is concerned, has been under consideration of Government.

Railways.

368. All the important lines of railway in this Province are under the direct control of the Government of India. The following light railways are, however, in some respects under the control of this Government:— Administration.

		Gauge Ft. in.	Length in mile.
1.	Darjeeling-Himalayan Railway	2 0	51·07
2.	Bengal Provincial Railway (Tarkeswar to Tribeni)..	2 6	33·27
3.	Howrah-Amta Light Railway	2 0	43·87
4.	Howrah-Sheakhalla Light Railway	2 0	19·75
5.	Barasat-Basirhat Light Railway	2 6	52·24
6.	Jessore-Jhenidah Railway	2 6	36·75
	Total ..		236·95

Mileage.

369. During the year no new lines of railway opened to traffic. The total mileage opened on 31st March 1926 was, therefore, the same as in the preceding year, *viz.*, 3,281·17 miles.

Surveys.

370. During the year the following surveys were sanctioned by the Railway Board:—

(1) A detailed survey for a line of railway on the metre gauge from Dinajpur to Ruhea, a distance of about 52 miles.

(2) A detailed survey for a line of railway on the metre gauge from Nachoul to Nator *viâ* Rampur Boalia, a distance of about 51 miles.

(3) A detailed survey for a line of railway on the broad gauge from Dhamua to Lakshmikantapur, a distance of about 19 miles.

(4) A detailed engineering survey of a line of railway on the broad gauge from Sainthia *viâ* Berhampore to Bhairamara, a distance of about 90 miles..

Under instructions from the Railway Board a reconnaissance survey was carried out by Mr. F. C. Legge and Major R. H. Stallard for a line of electric railway from Kankurgachi Junction *viâ* Sealdah station to Lyons Range or Harrison Road.

New construction.

371. The following lines were sanctioned for construction during the year:—

(1) A line of light railway on the 2′ 6″ gauge from Krishnagar to Nabadwip Ghât, a distance of about 10 miles.

(2) The Calcutta Chord Railway, which consists of the following lines:—

(*a*) a double line of chord railway on the 5′ 6″ gauge connecting Dankuni station on the Burdwan-Howrah Chord of the East Indian Railway with the Eastern Bengal Railway in the vicinity of Dum Dum, including a double track bridge over the river Hooghly at Bally;

(*b*) a single track connection, 1·84 miles in length, from the new chord to the up line of the East Indian Railway main line (Howrah-Bandal and *viâ*); and

(*c*) a single track connection, 1·63 miles in length, from the new chord to the down line of the East Indian Railway main line.

(3) A line of railway on the 5′ 6″ gauge from Dhamuah to Lakshmikantapur, a distance of 19 miles.

(4) A line of railway on the 3′ 3⅜″ gauge from Dinajpur to Ruhea, a distance of about 52 miles.

The second down line from Asansol to Ondal Junction was passed for passenger traffic in June 1925. The Aistala Ghat-Santipur Section of the Ranaghat-Krishnagar Branch Railway was converted from 2′ 6″ gauge to broad gauge, connected with the Murshidabad Branch of the Eastern Bengal Railway at Churni Bridge Junction and opened for passenger traffic on the 30th May 1925.

Dacca-Aricha Railway.

372. At the request of this Government, orders were issued by the Railway Board to the Agent, Eastern Bengal Railway, to carry out a traffic survey of the proposed Dacca-Aricha Railway. The Government of Bengal agreed to repay to the Railway Board the actual expenditure incurred on the survey if the result of the investigation prove the line to be unremunerative.

Irrigation Department.

Canals (Irrigation and Navigation).

[Administration Report of the Irrigation Department for the year 1925-26.]

373. The engineering problems that confront the Irrigation Department in Bengal are somewhat peculiar. The Province lies for the most part below the high flood level of the network of rivers that intersect it. The problems relate, therefore, mainly to operations of a defensive nature, such as navigation and protection of land, roads, railways and buildings from floods and erosion. The rivers themselves irrigate the land when in flood and also deposit silt, which again builds up and fertilizes the soil, and what is mainly needed is the regulation of the water on the land, provision for its drainage and the control of the river courses. It is only in a minor degree, therefore, that irrigation comes within the scope of this department.

374. The following statement shows the lengths of canals and distributaries which were in operation during the year:—

	Midnapore Canal.	Eden canal.
	Miles.	Miles.
Main Canal Irrigation	53·00	27·5
Branch Canal	16·75	
* Distributaries of above including minor and village channels	284·49	17·6
Navigable channels	69·75	..

Irrigation.

375. The following statement shows the areas irrigated during the year, as compared with the average of the triennial period ending March 1925 :—

	Midnapore Canal.			Eden Canal.		
	Kharif (including hot weather).	Rabi.	Total.	Kharif (including hot weather).	Rabi.	Total.
	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.
Average of the triennium ending March 1925 ..	75,408	1,454	76,862	20,360	633	20,993
For 1925-26 ..	75,698	..	75,698	23,374	462	23,836

Embankment and Drainage Works.

Expenditure.

376. The expenditure on embankment and drainage works, including charges for Establishment, Tools and Plant, was Rs. 13,57,434, against Rs. 12,00,573 in 1924-25.

Length of embankments.

377. The total length of embankments of all classes maintained by Government during the year was 1,298 miles and 3,360 feet as in the previous year.

Works carried out under the—(a) Bengal Drainage Act, VI of 1880.

378. The Dankuni, Howrah, Rajapur, and Burrojola drainage works in the Howrah district were maintained during the year at a cost of Rs. 17,636, against Rs. 18,078 in the previous year. The maintenance and repairs of the works in connection with the drainage of the Berhampore town and the flushing of the Bishnupur Bhil in the Nadia Rivers Division were done at a cost of Rs. 1,608, against Rs. 1,294 in the preceding year. An expenditure of Rs. 631 was incurred for the maintenance of the Gobra Nala and the removal of hyacinth weeds therein, against Rs. 804 of the previous year.

(b) Bengal Sanitary Drainage Act, VIII of 1895.

379. The Magrahat drainage scheme, which was carried out under the Sanitary Drainage Act, was maintained at a cost of Rs. 21,908, against Rs. 17,495 of the previous year. A sum of Rs. 1,874 was spent on silt clearance of the Joynagar Khal. The sluices at Diamond Harbour, Hobka and Peali were maintained in proper working order.

(c) Bengal Embankment Act, II of 1882.

380. The maintenance of Churial drainage works cost Rs. 2,885 only, against Rs. 3,154 in the previous year.

The transactions of the year are briefly described in the following summary which is divided for convenience into Circles of Superintendence :—

South-Western Circle.

Major Irrigation Works (Unproductive).

Midnapore Canal.

Capital outlay.

381. No capital expenditure was incurred on the Canal during the year. The total capital outlay (direct charges) to the end of the year was Rs. 83,10,888.

Rainfall.

382. The rainfall at Midnapore was 54·82 inches, as compared with 50·17 inches in the previous year.

Irrigation.

383. The area irrigated from the Canal was 75,698 acres, against 76,235 acres in the previous year. The cash realisation on account of water rates was Rs. 1,82,944, of which Rs. 933 was remitted against Rs. 1,70,729 and Rs. 1,035, respectively, of the previous year. The increase in realisation is due to enhancement of water rates.

Navigation.

384. The navigation receipts amounted to Rs. 60,320, against Rs. 65,832 in 1924-25. The seventh reach of the Canal remained closed from 15th February 1926 to 31st May 1926 on account of silt clearance.

Financial results.

385. The gross revenue and working expenses (direct and indirect) of the Canal amounted to Rs. 2,81,623 and Rs. 2,20,774, respectively, against Rs. 2,68,219 and Rs. 1,83,835, respectively, in the previous year. The net revenue of the year was Rs. 60,849, against Rs. 84,384 in the preceding year.

The expenditure under Maintenance and Repairs was Rs. 90,019, against Rs. 60,876 of the previous year.

Minor Irrigation Works.

Eden Canal.

386. The area irrigated from the Canal during the year was Rs. 23,836 acres, as compared with 21,010 and 20,324 in the two preceding years. The gross revenue derived was Rs. 40,047, as compared with Rs. 35,226 in the preceding year.

The expenditure on working expenses amounted to Rs. 50,258, as compared with Rs. 34,112 of the preceding year.

Irrigation Schemes in Western Bengal.

387. Preliminary arrangements were made during the year for taking up the work in connection with the Damodar Canal project. In the Midnapore district, surveys in connection with the Jhargram, Dhangara, Boital and Aushabandi projects were finished and the preparation of estimates was in progress. In the district of Bankura the Salbund scheme was completed, the reconstruction of the Amjore weir was commenced and the investigation of Berai Canal scheme and the preparation of the Kukrajore scheme were in progress. In the Birbhum district, the survey of the Bakreswar scheme was completed and the project was under preparation. The investigation of the More, Bansloi and other schemes was in progress. Some of the schemes will be carried out through the agency of Co-operative Societies, while others will be taken up under the Agricultural and Sanitary Improvements Act, VI of 1920, or the Irrigation Act, III of 1876.

Major Navigation Works (Unproductive).

Hijli Tidal Canal.

388. There was no outlay chargeable to the capital account of the Canal during the year. The total capital outlay (direct charges) to the end of the year amounted to Rs. 25,50,805. The gross revenue and working expenses (direct and indirect) amounted to Rs. 1,07,514 and Rs. 22,359, respectively, as against Rs. 1,30,365 and Rs. 17,703, respectively, in 1924-25. The net balance of revenue for the year was Rs. 85,155, as against Rs. 1,12,662 in the preceding year.

Minor Navigation Works.

Orissa Coast Canal.

389. This Canal lies partly in the Bengal Presidency (54·5 miles) and partly in the province of Bihar and Orissa, each Government dealing with the length lying within its territorial limits. The receipts and working expenses of the portion in Bengal were Rs. 39,365 and Rs. 12,398, respectively, as against Rs. 37,087 and Rs. 15,123, respectively, in the previous year. The balance of net revenue during the year was Rs. 26,967, against Rs. 21,964 in the preceding year.

Gaighatta and Buxi Khal.

390. This *khal*, about 7½ miles in length, is a connecting channel between two tidal rivers, the Rupnarain and the Damodar. To avoid the recurring expenditure for silt clearance and remission of rent consequent on suspensions of boat traffic during silt clearance, the *khal* was leased for six years—from 15th June 1921 to 14th June 1927—at a rental of Rs. 2,000, on condition that the

lessees did all silt clearance at their own cost and maintained the *khal* to a stipulated bed level, subject to the control of the Irrigation Department.

391. The approximate length of the channels comprised in the Nadia Rivers remained the same as in previous year, *viz.*, 489½ miles. Having been thrown open to free navigation from 1st September 1923, there were no navigation receipts from the system during the year. The maintenance charges amounted to Rs. 31,433, against Rs. 26,752 in the previous year. **Nadia Rivers.**

392. In the Upper Bhagirathi country, boat traffic was maintained up to January 1926, while in the Middle Bhagirathi, in the reach below Jeaganj and Berhampore, and in the Lower Bhagirathi, from Katwa to Nadia and downwards, it was maintained throughout the year. The steamer services of the Calcutta Steam Navigation Company between Calcutta and Nadia were also uninterrupted during the year. In the Middle and Lower Bhagirathi, 8 shoals with an aggregate length of 10,400 feet were trained by bandalling, against 7 of 15,500 feet in the previous year. **Bhagirathi.**

393. This river has its offtake from the Ganges about 2 miles below the present Lalgola railway station, and it joins the Bhagirathi at Nadia. There was no steamer service in the river during the year. Boat traffic was maintained from July to October 1925, after which the upper reaches for 20 miles were closed to traffic and in the lower reaches only small boats plied. **Bhairab, Jalangi.**

394. The Mathabhanga river takes off from the river Ganges at Muradpur, about a mile from the village Jalangi, and falls into the river Hooghly at Chakdah. In the Upper Mathabhanga, boat traffic was maintained from July to October, while in the Lower Mathabhanga it was maintained throughout the year. There was steamer traffic on the river and no bandalling work was done. **Mathabhanga.**

395. The conservancy operations of the river Ganges from Rajmahal to Goalundo continued to be carried out departmentally. Captain Niece of the Steamer Companies was employed to execute the work on behalf of Government, under the direct supervision of the Executive Engineer, Nadia Rivers Division. Eleven shoals were trained, against 10 of the previous year. The total expenditure incurred on the work was Rs. 18,572, against Rs. 17,072 of the previous year. **The Ganges from Rajmahal to Goalundo.**

396. No dredging or bandalling work was done at the Bhagirathi entrance during the year, as the conditions were not favourable. **Entrance to the Bhagirathi from the Ganges.**

397. Observations were taken at four stations, *viz.*, two on the Bhagirathi, one on the Mathabhanga and one on the Hooghly, up **Discharge observations.**

to the end of March 1926, to ascertain the discharges of the Bhagirathi and its feeder channels, the Bhairab, Jalangi and Mathabhanga. The total expenditure incurred on these observations was Rs. 4,426, against Rs. 4,570 of the previous year.

The Gorai River.

398. The Gorai takes off from the Ganges about 12 miles below the Hardinge Bridge at Sara. To record changes of the river during the year from the entrance to its junction with the Kaliganga river sections were taken, and a survey of the Ganges 5 miles above and below the Gorai entrance were made as usual; and some erosion was noticed. The expenditure incurred on surveying and taking observations was Rs. 346, against Rs. 548 of the previous year.

Ganges River at Rampur-Boalia.

399. No bandalling work was taken up during the year at Rampur-Boalia. The question, however, of keeping the Padma flowing down Rajshahi by bandalling and dredging for protecting the town people was under enquiry.

Anti-malarial works.

400. A sum of Rs. 25,793 was spent on the Amirabad drainage project during the year. No progress was made in the completion of the Amta and Jaboona projects. The upkeep of the Amta and Saraswati schemes cost Rs. 858 and Rs. 366 respectively. Investigations in connection with the Meherpur-Bhairab and Gobra Nala projects were in progress.

Surveys and investigations.

401. The investigation into the Northern Bengal flood was in progress. Surveys of the Moragangni *khal*, of the alignment of a cut from the river Kalkali to Gobra Nala and of the unauthorised private zemindari embankments within the prohibited area of the Damodar were completed and investigations of the Saraswati and the old Jalangi and Sealmari rivers were carried out. Survey was also made with a view to ascertain the best alignment of the outfall channel to the Rupnarain river near the 5th mile of the embankment. A general survey of the country lying within the Birbhum Irrigation Subdivision was done with a view to the improvement of the rivers and the exploration of the facilities for irrigation, and Rs. 1,152 was spent for survey of the proposed Bakreswar Canal scheme.

River floods, breaches, etc.

402. There were no heavy floods during the year. Breaches, however, occurred in the forward line of the Bhagirathi embankment at Majhyampur and in the embankment along the left bank of the Ganges at Pabna, which was greatly damaged by a cyclonic storm on the 15th September 1925. In the former case the breaches were covered by the new retired line, and in the latter the damaged proportion was repaired.

Southern Circle.

Minor Navigation Works.

Calcutta and Eastern Canals.

403. Under capital account of the Calcutta and Eastern Canals, an expenditure of Rs. (-) 4,82,626 (direct) during the year is shown, inclusive of receipts on the capital account. The navigation receipts from the canals during the year amounted to Rs. 4,36,780, against Rs. 4,84,206 of the previous year. The decrease is due to a fall in export of rice and paddy, the Calcutta price being much lower than the price in the mufassal. The total gross receipts amounted to Rs. 4,74,241, and the working expenses (direct and indirect) to Rs. 6,23,403, the deficit being Rs. 1,49,162, against Rs. 3,19,386 in the previous year.

The more important items on which expenditure was incurred under the revenue account of the canals during the year are noted below:—

Extensions and Improvements.

	Rs.
(1) Reconstruction of the Dum Dum Bridge (amount paid to the Calcutta Improvement Trust on account of Government share of the work)	3,70,000
(2) Construction of an office for the Calcutta Canals Subdivision	6,995
(3) Construction of a lock and sluice with diversion channel at the mouth of the Kaorapukur khal	11,035
(4) Construction of an Inspection bungalow at Samukpota ..	9,914
(5) Construction of a temporary bridge in connection with the reconstruction of the Goria bridge	8,035
(6) Construction of a new toll office at Kidderpore	4,743

Maintenance and Repairs.

(1) Maintenance of canals	67,947
(2) Purchase of a steam road-roller for repairs to canal roads ..	9,350
(3) Silt clearance of Tolly's Nala	36,452
(4) Silt clearance of Kaorapukur khal	15,002
(5) Dredging Bhangore khal	27,013

The construction of the Dum Dum Bridge over the Circular Canal, through the agency of the Calcutta Improvement Trust, was completed during the year. Arrangements were also in progress for reconstructing the Chitpur, Maniktola, Narkeldanga, Beliaghatta, Alipore, Tollygunge and Garia bridges.

Sunderbans Steamer Route.

404. No capital expenditure was incurred on this route during the year under report. The receipts and working expenses (direct

and indirect) during the year amounted to Rs. 55,719 and Rs. 4,60,036 respectively, the result being a net deficit of Rs. 4,04,317 against a net revenue of Rs. 9,825 in the previous year. The important items of extensions and improvements and maintenance and repairs carried out during the year on the route were the following:—

	Rs.
(1) Construction of the Sectional Officer's quarters at Mollerhat	3,908
(2) Upkeep of marks and buoys in the route	14,000
(3) Dredging the Doagra channel	1,20,996
(4) Working launches and barges	3,532
(5) Dredging shoals in the Attarabanka river	13,526
(6) Repairs to *Foyers* and *Alexandra*, including laying up ..	1,89,372

The expenditure on the repair to the *Cowley* and *Burdwan* dredgers, including laying up, was Rs. 42,907 and 18,209 respectively.

Madaripur Bhil Route.

405. The expenditure during the year (direct charges) debitable to the capital account of the route was Rs. 1,34,956, of which Rs. 1,07,023 represents the outlay on works. This sum was chiefly spent on dredging the Lower Kumar between Takerhat and Charmaguria and excavating sidings in the 12th and 14th miles of the route. The expenditure on these works during the year was Rs. 40,903 and Rs. 58,826, respectively.

The total capital outlay (direct charges) to the end of the year amounted to Rs. 72,88,858, against the sanctioned estimate amounting to Rs. 75,57,056. The construction estimate was closed with effect from 31st March 1917 and the remaining works are being carried out under the rules governing expenditure chargeable to the open capital account. The receipts and working expenses (direct and indirect) were Rs. 3,79,729 and Rs. 2,20,558, respectively, against Rs. 3,44,752 and Rs. 2,08,061, respectively, in the preceding year. This increase in receipts, as compared with the previous year, is due to the fact that tolls at the increased rates during 1924-25 were realised with effect from the middle of August 1924.

The following works of importance were carried out under the head "Maintenance and repairs" during the year:—

	Rs.
(1) Maintenance of the route	14,025
(2) Dredging shoals at Pearpur	21,036
(3) Dredging shoals in the Fatehpur-Takerhat link ..	8,823
(4) Special repairs to the Southern embankment	21,913
(5) Repairs to damages by flood to the southern embankment	5,148
(6) Dredging silt at the entrance of the Lower Kumar river at Charmaguria	11,348

406. Bandalling works were carried out as usual in the Dhaleswari and Buriganga rivers, in order to maintain a navigable depth of water in the approaches to the City of Dacca during the low water season and also for supply of good drinking water. The expenditure incurred during the year was Rs. 19,629. The least depth of water maintained on the worst shoals was 2′ 6″. The steamer service was maintained as far as Lalitganj up to the 1st week of December and, thereafter, up to Sabhar. The Nabaganga is the only communication to the subdivisional town of Magura in Jessore from Khulna. It is silted up every year above Chowlia. In order to make it navigable by concentrating the current to one side, bandalling was done and the steamer service maintained longer than usual. A sum of Rs. 5,060 was spent during the year.

River training works. The Dhaleswari, Buriganga and Nabaganga Rivers.

407. The embankment along the left bank of the Hooghly river was kept in good condition and Rs. 20,665 was spent on its maintenance and repairs. The work of remodelling the crest and slope of 24-Parganas embankment between Utterbhag and Champahati was in progress. The resectioning of the embankment from Beliagachi to Sreekristopur was completed and that from Samukpota to Nabasan was commenced. Brush wood fascines were laid along the bank of the Baiganbari khal to stop erosion. An estimate amounting to Rs. 29,224 was sanctioned during the year for protecting the bank of the river with brick mattress.

Protective works.

408. The Monikhally, Madanpur, Veragachi and Arapunch drainage schemes, which were completed in previous years, worked satisfactorily, and effectively drained the flooded area. Arrangements were made during the year for completing the remaining portion of the Nowi-Sunthi project. The excavation of a cut between the Arool and Bookhara bhils will be taken up as soon as contractors are found to carry it out at reasonable rates. Both these schemes are treated as Government works and will be maintained at Government cost, although the District Board will contribute the estimated cost of completion in each case. The revised Bhairab project II for making a connecting cut between the Nabaganga above Jhenidah and the Bhairab river was prepared and was under examination of the Director of Public Health. The project is estimated to cost Rs. 26,54,659.

Anti-malarial works.

409. A survey of the Buriganga at the offtake was carried out and a detailed survey for the preparation of schemes for the improvement of waterways in the Manikganj subdivision was taken up during the year. An investigation was also made in connection with the flushing of the upper reaches of the Bhairab river by improving the channel connecting the Jaleswar bhil and the Bhariab.

Investigations.

River floods, etc.

410. There were no heavy floods during the year, as the rainfall was normal. In order to avoid congestion of drainage, however, necessary precautions were taken beforehand and by opening out sluices in embankments. The condition of the crops on the whole was satisfactory.

Grand Trunk Canal Project.

411. As funds were not voted by the Legislative Council, this work was held in abeyance during the year. No new land was acquired, but a sum of Rs. 7,870 was paid on account of enhancement of award by the Special Land Acquisition Judge. A sum of Rs. 7,099 was spent on repairing and laying up the dredger *Ronaldshay* and also for fitting in 3 new cast-iron bollards. The expenditure on general upkeep of works, including the cost of payment of municipal taxes for the acquired holdings, amounted to Rs. 2,334. The total revenue realised from acquired lands and houses, etc., at Baranagore, Kristopur and Kulti was Rs. 11,697.

The total expenditure up to the end of the Canal amounted to Rs. 69,50,154 (direct and indirect).

The deterioration of the Sunderbans Steamer Route is continuing and is a matter for grave anxiety. The execution of the Grand Trunk Canal project appears to be absolutely necessary to ensure a satisfactory navigable connection between Calcutta and Eastern Bengal and Assam for inland steam vessels. Further investigation of the project is, therefore, proposed.

CHAPTER V.—REVENUE AND FINANCE.

A.—Imperial Revenue and Finance.

412. The revenue for the year from Imperial heads (excluding the receipts from *Customs*) amounted to Rs. 11·10 crores, *i.e.*, almost the same as in the previous year. The revenue from *Customs* has been omitted from the statement as the figures are recorded in the books of the Accountant General of Central Revenue, Delhi, and this Government are not concerned with them.

The details are shown in the statement below:—

Major Heads.	1924-25.	1925-26.	Increase.	Decrease.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
II.—Taxes on Income ..	5,54,73,933	5,93,10,711	38,36,778	....
III.—Salt	2,35,90,897	1,07,430	....	2,34,83,467
IV.—Opium	2,86,97,628	2,98,27,695	11,30,067	....
X.—Tributes from Indian States	60,650	74,752	14,102	....
XVI.—Interest ..	11,80,880	10,24,515	....	1,56,365
XX.—Ports and Pilotage ..	15,42,465	15,46,022	3,557	....
XXVI.—Miscellaneous Departments ..	64,093	78,410	14,317	....
XXVII.—Currency ..	14,979	23,846	8,867	....
XXX.—Civil Works ..	72,447	1,09,345	36,898	....
XXXIII.—Superannuation ..	2,54,957	2,86,288	31,331	....
XXXIV.—Stationery and Printing	37,315	992	....	36,353
XXXV.—Miscellaneous ..	14,995	8,708	....	6,287
XXXIXA.—Miscellaneous Adjustments between Central and Provincial Governments ..	17,250	41,734	24,484	....
Total Revenue ..	11,10,22,519	9,24,40,448	51,00,401	2,36,82,472
			Net decrease ..	1,85,82,071

The main fluctuations are explained as follows:—

Taxes on Income.—The increases compared with the actuals of 1924-25 is mainly due to increased assessments for Super-tax and Income-tax.

Salt.—The decrease is due to the separation of the accounts of Calcutta Customs and Chittagong Customs, the receipts of which are being adjusted in the books of the Pay and Accounts Office, Customs.

Opium.—The increase is due to a larger number of opium chests having been sold to Far Eastern Governments and to larger receipts representing cost price of Excise opium held in stock at treasuries in Bengal and also from medical opium sold in England.

The following statement shows the Central expenditure in 1925-26 as compared with that of 1924-25:—

Major Heads.	1924-25.	1925-26.	Increase.	Decrease.
	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.	Rs.
2.—Taxes on Income ..	8,22,972	9,52,218	1,29,246	....
3.—Salt	3,22,357	2,23,772	....	98,585
4.—Opium	24,892	26,822	1,930	....
19.—Interest on ordinary debt	3,69,676	15,28,350	11,58,674	....
20.—Interest on other obligation	7,87,219	16,34,668	8,47,449	....
22.—General Administration ..	59,861	41,122	....	18,739
23.—Audit	6,65,126	6,98,800	33,674	....
24.—Administration of Justice	43,418	46,108	2,690	....
26.—Police	1,14,200	1,16,613	2,413	....
27.—Ports and Pilotage ..	16,31,604	19,93,604	3,62,000	....
28.—Ecclesiastical ..	1,88,873	1,82,443	....	6,430
29.—Political	82,435	96,739	14,304	....
33.—Public Health ..	3,173	88,896	85,723	....
37.—Miscellaneous Departments	68,073	72,259	4,186	....
38.—Currency	56,289	51,364	....	4,925
41.—Civil Works	10,08,265	11,10,623	1,02,358	....
44.—Territorial and Political Pensions	6,33,365	5,80,639	....	52,726
45.—Superannuation ..	2,14,888	16,50,556	14,35,668	....
46.—Stationery and Printing ..	87,000	....	....	87,000
47.—Miscellaneous ..	6,815	11,605	4,790	....
51A.—Miscellaneous Adjustments between Central and Provincial Governments ..	2,20,528	41,243	....	1,79,285
Total Expenditure ..	74,11,029	1,11,48,534	41,85,195	4,47,690
			Net increase ..	37,37,505

The variation shown in the item *Ports and Pilotage* is chiefly attributable to the expenditure incurred on account of P. V. *Lady Fraser* as also of P. V. *Fraser* (reconditioning).

Salt.

[Salt Administration Report, 1925-26.]

Salt credit system.

413. The number of merchants who availed themselves of the credit system dropped from 108 to 63. The amount of duty outstanding for adjustment at the end of the year was Rs. 73,98,329 as compared with Rs. 76,57,868 at the close of the year 1924-25.

Imports.

414. The total imports into Calcutta and Chittagong showed a decrease of 12·1 and an increase of 14·7 per cent., respectively. The United Kingdom, Hamburg and Massawah, however, recorded some increase in imports to Calcutta, while the imports from Spain rose from 3,31,023 to 8,36,323 maunds. There were no imports from Tunis, Karachi, Madras or Tuticorin during the year, against 1,10,080 maunds from Tunis and 10,000 maunds from the three

latter places during the year 1924-25. The imports from Bombay and Somaliland (Djibouti) shewed a decrease of 6,37,730 and 2,07,176 maunds, respectively. In Chittagong there was an import of 1,37,419 maunds of salt from Spain against *nil* in the preceding year. The imports from Aden and Port Said shewed an increase of 5,02,826 maunds and a decrease of 3,36,804 maunds, respectively.

Consumption and prices.

415. The total quantity of salt which passed into consumption in Calcutta was 63,48,924 maunds against 62,23,494 maunds in 1924-25, while in Chittagong the figures were 12,61,684 against 14,96,750. The average wholesale price per maund of salt, inclusive of duty, was 8 pies lower than in the preceding year. The average wholesale price per 100 maunds in Calcutta was Rs. 68 against Rs. 82 in the previous year. In Chittagong also the price shows a decline from Rs. 79 to Rs. 69. The average wholesale price of Liverpool salt per 100 maunds in Calcutta was Rs. 69 against Rs. 92 in the previous year.

Income-Tax.

[Annual Report and Returns of the Income-Tax Department, Bengal, for 1925-26.]

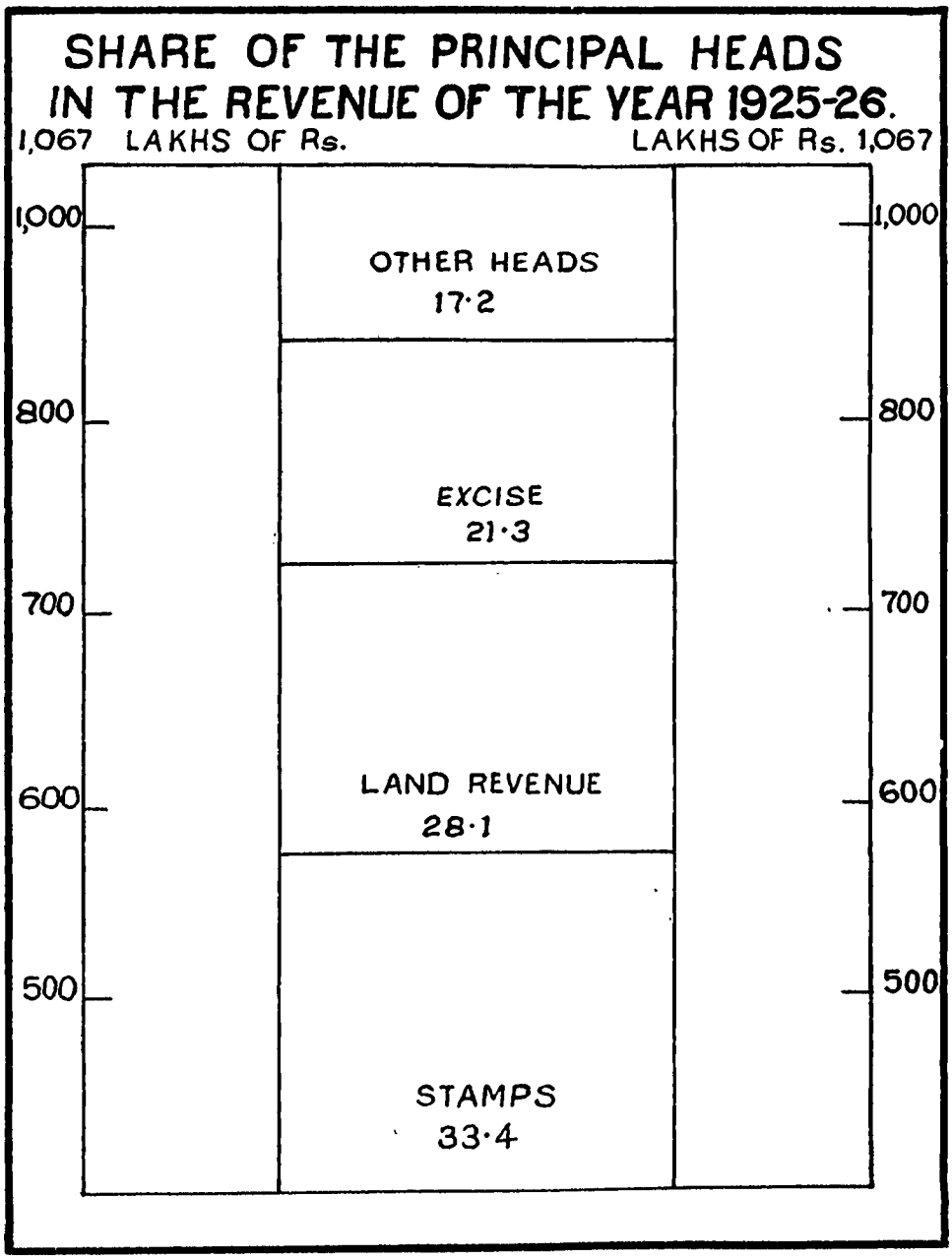
416. Only in seven revenue districts during 1925-26 was the work of Income-tax in the hands of the Executive Officers of the local Government. Towards the close of the year, the Commissioner of Income-tax arranged to take over, with effect from the 1st April, 1926, the administration in three more revenue districts, *viz.*, Dinajpur, Faridpur and Bakarganj.

There was no distinct improvement in trade, except in jute and tea, during 1924-25, the income of which formed the basis of the assessments of the year under review. Coal fared badly and the shipping industry was at a standstill so far as revenue was concerned. There was no noteworthy influence, economic or otherwise, affecting the revenue of the year.

The table below shows the figure of assessed income of 1925-26 as compared with those of the previous years:—

	Rs.
Standard figure, *i.e.*, assessed income in 1920-21 as revised up to 31st March 1926	62,34,84,258
Assessed income in 1921-22	(Not available.)
Assessed income in 1922-23	47,55,84,223
Assessed income in 1923-24	49,65,89,966
Assessed income in 1924-25	47,13,61,347
Assessed income in 1925-26	51,29,35,399

Bengal has up to now derived no benefit from Devolution Rule 15 and, as the figures of assessed income quoted above would


SHARE OF THE PRINCIPAL HEADS
IN THE REVENUE OF THE YEAR 1925-26.
1,067 LAKHS OF Rs.
LAKHS OF Rs. 1,067
1,000
800
700
600
500
OTHER HEADS
17·2
EXCISE
21·3
LAND REVENUE
28·1
STAMPS
33·4

indicate, she can hope to do so only if there is a general trade boom in any particular year.

The collections of Income-tax amounted to Rs. 3·26 lakhs and of Super-tax to Rs. 2·46 lakhs as compared with Rs. 3·10 lakhs and Rs. 2·18 lakhs, respectively, in 1924-25. Other details and figures will be found in the returns submitted by the Commissioner to the Central Board of Revenue.

B.—Revenue and Finance other than Central—Provincial Finance.

Statement of Provincial Receipts—Actuals.

417. The following statement shows the revenue collected in Bengal during 1925-26 as compared with those for 1924-25:—

Revenue and Receipts.	Actuals, 1924-25.	Actuals, 1925-26.
	Rs.	Rs.
V.—Land Revenue	3,10,73,587	3,00,34,533
VI.—Excise	2,15,07,342	2,28,02,451
VII.—Stamps	3,36,67,756	3,57,98,109
VIII.—Forests	24,75,529	28,56,383
IX.—Registration	25,84,520	38,92,052
IXA.—Scheduled taxes	21,51,934	19,81,292
XII.—Subsidized companies	93,439	81,558
XIII.—Irrigation, Navigation, Embankment and Drainage Works for which capital accounts are kept (net)	87,838	−2,15,840
XIV.—Irrigation, Navigation, Embankment and Drainage Works for which no capital accounts are kept	2,48,467	2,50,075
XVI.—Interest	3,47,808	2,66,131
XVII.—Administration of Justice ..	13,29,635	14,37,552
XVIII.—Jails and Convict Settlements ..	12,61,646	10,70,475
XIX.—Police	6,64,441	7,35,693
XX.—Ports and Pilotage ..	49,622	19,364
XXI.—Education	11,20,280	12,13,109
XXII.—Medical	7,26,895	7,21,502
XXIII.—Public Health	46,826	44,936
XXIV.—Agriculture	2,79,236	2,07,240
XXV.—Industries	6,65,851	6,76,869
XXVI.—Miscellaneous Departments ..	49,568	23,921
XXX.—Civil Works	6,57,014	5,82,195
XXXIII.—Receipts in aid of Superannuation	7,01,145	7,13,973
XXXIV.—Stationery and Printing ..	1,87,262	1,96,106
XXXV.—Miscellaneous	12,52,688	13,38,499
XL.—Miscellaneous Adjustmnets between the Central and Provincial Governments	....	....
XL.—Extraordinary Receipts ..	....	....
Receipts in England	....	880
Total Revenue ..	10,32,30,329	10,67,29,058

Statement of Provincial Expenditure—Actuals.

418. The statement below shows the charges on account of Provincial Services for 1925-26 as compared with those for 1924-25:—

Expenditure.	Actuals, 1924-25.	Actuals, 1925-26.
	Rs.	Rs.
5.—Land Revenue	30,94,391	35,42,178
6.—Excise	12,93,506	26,02,120
7.—Stamps	9,47,542	8,70,292
8.—Forest	14,17,472	12,61,099
8A.—Forest capital outlay charged to revenue	....	43,257
9.—Registration	18,08,139	18,73,391
9A.—Scheduled taxes	15,000	15,000
14.—Interest on works for which capital accounts are kept	18,91,292	18,76,010
15.—Other revenue expenditure financed from ordinary revenue	13,22,328	15,65,320
15 (1).—Other revenue expenditure financed from Famine Insurance grants ..	....	....
16.—Construction of Irrigation, Navigation and Drainage Works—		
A—Financed from Famine Insurance grants	....	....
B—Financed from ordinary revenue	3,77,921	—3,45,620
19.—Interest on ordinary debt	—8,38,051	—8,58,980
21.—Reduction or avoidance of debt ..	....	....
22.—General Administration	1,11,81,249	1,15,38,998
24.—Administration of Justice	1,06,87,408	1,08,57,735
25.—Jails and Convict Settlement ..	32,06,980	31,06,009
26.—Police	1,79,43,064	1,80,35,643
27.—Ports and Pilotage	7,55,398	6,21,723
30.—Scientific Departments	25,010	25,920
31.—Education	1,21,00,605	1,31,68,201
32.—Medical	55,44,104	57,19,824
33.—Public Health	28,34,468	23,85,522
34.—Agriculture	18,00,271	19,49,318
35.—Industries	9,34,423	11,24,148
37.—Miscellaneous Departments	4,51,555	2,27,561
41.—Civil Works	95,53,590	1,10,36,361
43.—Famine Relief and Insurance ..	2,00,000	2,00,000
45.—Superannuation	50,65,883	60,19 925
46.—Stationery and Printing	14,93,872	16,20,497
47.—Miscellaneous	2,46,503	2,87,048
51.—Contributions and assignments to the Central Government by Provincial Governments	....	....
Expenditure in England	22,59,153	27,23,220
Total ..	11,76,13,076	10,30,91,720
55.—Irrigation capital not charged to revenue	—1,440	—1,90,126
60.—Civil Works not charged to revenue ..	....	7,47,498
GRAND TOTAL	11,76,11,636	10,36,49,092

The principal variations under Receipts are explained as follows:—

Land Revenue.—The decrease is more apparent than real. It is due to changes in the dates of certain *kists* of some estates in the Burdwan district in consequence of which the latest date of payment of revenue amounting approximately to 11 lakhs of rupees fell in June instead of in March.

Excise.—The adjustment of the entire sale proceeds of Excise opium under this head, without deducting the cost price payable to the Government of India as done hithertofore, mainly accounts for the increase. To some extent, however, the increase was counteracted by the competition of cheap imported foreign liquor and by a fall in the consumption of country liquor in the Calcutta Excise area where the sale is comparatively high.

Stamps.—The increase is due to revival of trade conditions and developments of industries.

Forests.—The improvement is due to an increased demand for forest produce and to the revision of rates of royalty in the Sunderbans.

Registration.—The increase is mainly due to the revision of registration fees and to an increase in the registration of documents.

Scheduled taxes.—Smaller receipts from the Entertainment Tax mainly account for the decrease.

Irrigation, Navigation, Embankment and Drainage works for which capital accounts are kept.—The decrease is due to larger maintenance charges on the Sunderbans steamer route, which were taken in reduction of receipts.

Interest.—Smaller recoveries of interest on loans under the Agriculturists' Loans Act is the main cause of the decrease.

Administration of Justice.—Larger credits on account of miscellaneous receipts in the High Court mainly account for the increase in revenue.

Jails and Convict Settlements.—Fall in the sale of jail-made articles accounts for the decrease.

Police.—The increase is mainly due to larger recoveries of Police charges from other Governments.

Ports and Pilotage.—Absence of any credit for the sale proceeds of launches mainly accounts for the fall as compared with the actuals of 1924-25.

Education.—Levy of fees at increased rates in secondary schools accounts for the growth of revenue under this head.

Agriculture.—Failure of other Governments to pay their share of the cost of the Bengal Veterinary College mainly accounts for the decrease.

Miscellaneous Department.—The decrease is due to the absence of any receipts from the British Empire Exhibition as were credited under this head in the previous year.

Civil Works.—The accounts of 1924-25 included a special receipt from Messrs. Sen Gupta, Ltd., as a result of a decree of the High Court. Absence of any such special receipt in 1925-26 accounts for the decrease.

Miscellaneous.—Larger credits on account of unclaimed deposits contributed towards the increase in revenue.

The principal variations under Expenditure are explained as follows:—

Land Revenue.—Larger expenditure on Survey and Settlement operations and a change in the accounts procedure, whereby recoveries of road and public work cesses of Government estates were credited as receipts instead of being taken as a set-off against expenditure as hithertofore, mainly account for the increase in expenditure.

Excise.—Adjustment of the cost price of opium supplied by the Gazipur Factory to the Excise Department under this head instead of taking such charge as a set-off against receipts as usual, mainly caused the increase in expenditure.

Stamps.—The decrease is due to smaller adjustments of charges on account of stamps supplied from Central Stores.

Forests.—Adjustment of capital expenditure under heads opened for keeping capital accounts and smaller expenditure under "Timber and other produce removed from the forests by Government agency" and smaller outlay on communication for buildings, are the main reasons for the decrease in expenditure under this head.

8A.—Forests.—This is a new capital head opened to record all forest capital expenditure financed from General Revenues and finally adjusted under this head by transfer in lump from the head "52A—Forest capital not charged to revenue".

Registration.—Increments of pay of officers and establishment and the entertainment of a larger temporary establishment to cope with the increase in work chiefly account for the increase in expenditure under this head.

Other revenue expenditure financed from ordinary revenue.—Larger outlay on the remodelling of the Hoorhoora Khal and on the repairing and widening of the Baxi Khal mainly caused the increase in expenditure.

Construction of Irrigation, Navigation, Embankment and Drainage works—B—Financed from ordinary revenue.—The savings are due partly to a credit of Rs. 4,15,000 under the head "*Deduct*—Receipts and recoveries on capital account" owing to the readjustment of the cost of canal surplus land which was erroneously credited to the head "V—Land Revenue" and partly to the smaller capital expenditure on the Madaripur Bhil Route.

General Administration.—Larger expenditure on account of Law charges under "General Establishment" and loss from exchange mainly account for the increase.

Administration of Justice.—The increase is mainly due to the appointment of Additional Judges and additional staff in the High Court and to increments in the pay of officers.

Jails and Convict Settlements.—Smaller outlay in the purchase of raw materials in Central Jails is mainly responsible for the decrease under this head.

Police.—Larger expenditure for temporary force in the Criminal Investigation Department chiefly accounts for the increase.

Ports and Pilotage.—A special expenditure was incurred in the previous year for the purchase of land for the Dockyard at Narayanganj. Absence of any such special expenditure in 1925-26 accounts for the decrease under this head.

Education.—The increase is mainly due to larger grants to non-Government Arts colleges and secondary, primary and special schools and to larger expenditure on the pay of officers and on contingencies in Arts colleges.

Medical.—Larger grants to the Ranchi Mental Hospital accounts for the increase.

Public Health.—The decrease is due to the payment of smaller grants for public health purposes for want of sufficient number of ready schemes.

Agriculture.—An increased outlay on medical and surgical requisities in the Veterinary Department and larger expenditure on contingencies in the Department of Agriculture and in pay of establishment in the Co-operative Department chiefly account for the increase.

Industries.—Larger expenditure for industrial and technical education is mainly responsible for the increase.

Miscellaneous Departments.—The actuals of 1924-25 included an expenditure of Rs. 2,23,000 in connection with the British Empire Exhibition. Absence of any such special expenditure in 1925-26 mainly accounts for the decrease.

Civil Works.—Larger outlay on new building works is responsible for the increase in expenditure under this head.

Superannuation.—The increase is due to larger payments of pensions and of commuted values of pensions, including arrears paid to other Governments.

Stationery and Printing.—The increase is due partly to smaller adjustments of the cost of printing work done for Central Departments by Provincial presses, and partly to higher cost of the same done for Provincial Government at Central Government Press.

Miscellaneous.—Larger expenditure in the maintenance of détenus under the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1925 who are domiciled outside jails, mainly accounts for the increase in expenditure.

Expenditure in England.—Larger payments of leave and deputation salaries and overseas pay to officers, chiefly account for the increase under this head.

Irrigation.—The decrease is mainly due to adjustment of credits on account of hire of dredgers in reduction of expenditure under this head, the corresponding credit having been transferred to the head *Construction of Irrigation, Navigation, Embankment and Drainage Works financed from ordinary revenue* in the previous year.

Civil Works not charged to revenue.—This new head has been opened to debit capital expenditure on new buildings financed from loan.

Stamps.

[Annual Statistics of the Stamp Department for the year 1925-26. Statistics of British India, Part IV (*b*)—Finance and Revenue.]

Revenue and charges.

419. The total receipts under the Stamp and Court-fees Acts amounted to Rs. 3,67,18,643 during the year 1925-26, showing an increase of Rs. 22,39,358 or 6·5 per cent. over those of 1924-25. The increase occurred both under judicial and non-judicial stamps.

The charges during the year were Rs. 8,67,351 against Rs. 8,93,624 in the previous year.

Judicial stamps.

420. The sale proceeds of court-fee stamps (excluding stamps for copies) rose from Rs. 2,05,44,378 in 1924-25 to Rs. 2,16,73,138 in 1925-26, showing an increase of Rs. 11,28,760. Of this increase Calcutta contributed Rs. 9,86,802, the main reason being that a number of big estates came under probate or letters of administration. There was also a marked increase in the districts of Chittagong, Khulna, the 24-Parganas and Bogra. In the 24-Parganas

and Khulna the increase was due to settlement operations, while in Chittagong and Bogra it is attributed to the institution of a larger number of suits.

Non-judicial stamps.

421. The revenue derived from the sale of non-judicial stamps rose from Rs. 1,28,91,039 to Rs. 1,37,91,619, showing an increase of Rs. 9,00,580. The increase mainly occurred under the head *Impressed stamps* and was due to the registration of a larger number of documents during the year. The increase was shared by all the districts, but in Calcutta a reduced number of documents in the Bengali language was registered.

Sale of stamps.

422. The number of vendors holding licenses to sell stamps rose from 5,324 to 5,439, and the amount of discount allowed to them rose from Rs. 4,37,610 to Rs. 4,78,593.

Deficient duty.

423. The total number of cases in which deficient duty and penalty were levied by the Civil Courts under section 35 of Act II of 1899 fell from 1,524 to 1,309. The amount of duty and penalty realised in these cases was Rs. 14,488 against Rs. 13,602 in 1924-25. The number of cases decided by Revenue Courts under sections 32, 37, 40 and 41 of the Act rose from 4,217 to 4,750, and the amount of penalty realised increased from Rs. 55,886 to Rs. 97,308.

Prosecutions under the Stamp Act.

424. The number of cases instituted for infringement of the provisions of the Stamp Act was 253 against 201 in 1924-25. Of the 98 persons brought to trial, 90 were convicted; the figures for the previous year being 32 and 24, respectively. The fines imposed rose from Rs. 404 to Rs. 1,063, and the rewards paid to informers increased from Rs. 45 to Rs. 441.

Working of section 19H of the Court Fees Act.

425. Of the cases of valuation of estates for the issue of probates and letters of administration reported during 1925-26 including those pending at the beginning of the year, 72·6 per cent. were completely enquired into against 72·9 per cent. in the preceding year. The proportion borne by the deficit duty required to the amount originally realised was 26·1 per cent. against 10·2 per cent. in the previous year.

Excise.

[Report on the Administration of the Excise Department in Bengal, 1925-26. Statistics of British India, Part IV (*b*)—Finance and Revenue Accounts.]

Excise Licensing Boards and Advisory Committees.

426. Government continued to act on the advice of the Licensing Boards of Calcutta and its suburbs, and in areas outside the Calcutta district all recommendations of the Local Advisory Committees were carefully considered and most of them given effect to.

Revenue.

427. The total excise revenue amounted to Rs. 2,28,44,009 against Rs. 2,15,53,443 in the previous year, showing an increase of Rs. 12,90,566. The heads which showed an increase were *Opium* (Rs. 13,99,674), due to the inclusion of cost price, *Tari* (Rs. 1,72,281), *Ganja* (Rs. 1,66,346) and *Commercial Spirits* (Rs. 13,321). Against this there was a decrease of Rs. 1,77,760 under *Pachwai*, of Rs. 1,03,035 under *Duty on locally manufactured foreign liquor* and of Rs. 74,844 under *License fees for sale of opium*. The incidence of revenue was 7 annas 9 pies against 7 annas 4 pies in the previous year.

Country spirit.

428. The system of contract supply was the only system in force during the year. The number of shops decreased by 14 while the consumption increased by 22,698 London-proof gallons. Consumption increased in 22 districts and decreased in 5. The increase was considerable in Jalpaiguri, due to measures undertaken to combat the consumption of cheap illicit liquor by tea garden labourers, while Calcutta showed an appreciable decrease mainly due to trade depression and partly also to the abolition of certain licensed premises under orders of the Licensing Board. There was a general increase in consumption in most of the districts in North and East Bengal. High price of jute and consequent increased activity in most of the jute centres, increased operations on the Eastern Bengal Railway in North Bengal and on roads in the Darjeeling district, and stricter supervision over licensed premises led to the increase.

Tari.

429. The tree-tax system was continued in the same areas as in last year. The total number of fermented *tari* licenses decreased from 554 to 543, whereas the total receipts increased from Rs. 7,12,611 to Rs. 8,84,892.

Pachwai.

430. The total number of *pachwai* licenses issued was 37,326 as compared with 34,930 in 1924-25. The revenue from retail license fees decreased from Rs. 13,90,993 to Rs. 12,14,396. The decrease was considerable in Burdwan, Bankura and Darjeeling. The revenue from home-brewing licenses decreased from Rs. 59,033 to Rs. 57,870.

Foreign liquor.

431. The total number of licenses issued for wholesale and retail sale of potable foreign liquor, exclusive of licenses for the retail sale of medicated wines and commercial spirits, was 1,623 against 1,404 in the preceding year. The total receipts from license fees decreased from Rs. 3,05,907 to Rs. 2,95,784. The receipts from duty amounted to Rs. 7,53,882 against Rs. 8,53,342 in the previous year, the decrease being mainly due to the preference shown by consumers to cheap imported brandy and whisky.

Ganja.

432. The total number of licenses issued for the retail sale of *ganja* was 1,215 as compared with 1,201 in the preceding year. The total receipts amounted to Rs. 43,60,085 against Rs. 42,78,822 in the previous year, the net increase being Rs. 81,263. The total quantity of *ganja* consumed amounted to 1,787 maunds as compared with 1,727 maunds in 1924-25. Consumption increased in 24 districts and decreased in 3. The increase was shared by all the divisions except the Presidency. It was due to better economic conditions of *ganja* consumers on account of better price of jute in all jute centres and good harvest of paddy in many areas in the Province. In some districts the increase was due to change in the personnel of the vendors and to closer supervision over licensed premises. The total taxation was Rs. 58·7 per seer as compared with Rs. 60·3 in the previous year.

Bhang.

433. The total consumption of *bhang* amounted to 437 maunds as compared with 445 maunds in the preceding year. The total revenue from license fees and duty amounted to Rs. 2,12,745 against Rs. 2,22,082 in 1924-25, showing a decrease of Rs. 9,326.

Charas.

434. The total number of retail licenses was 35 against 31 in the previous year and the total revenue amounted to Rs. 2,66,007 as compared with Rs. 2,51,132 in 1924-25.

Opium.

435. The system under which the issue of opium to retail shops is restricted to the estimated local demand continued in the districts in which it had been enforced previously. The total number of licenses issued for the retail sale of opium was 861 as compared with 846 in the previous year. The quantity of opium consumed fell from 1,003 maunds to 998 maunds. Consumption decreased in the Presidency and Burdwan Divisions while the three other Divisions showed an increase which was generally due to better economic conditions. The total receipts amounted to Rs. 46,29,635 as compared with Rs. 33,04,805 in 1924-25, showing an increase of Rs. 13,24,830. The increase was only nominal as it included the cost price of opium payable to the Government of India.

Cocaine.

436. The total number of licenses issued to chemists and druggists for the sale of cocaine was 391 as compared with 357 in 1924-25. Seventy-one permits for the possession of cocaine were issued free to managers of hospitals or dispensaries not under Government supervision and forty-six permits to qualified medical practitioners and dentists. The total number of arrests for illicit possession of cocaine was 441 against 317 in the previous year. The illicit trade in cocaine continued during the year under report. In Calcutta 232 oz. of cocaine were seized by Excise officers, 1,500 oz. by Customs officers and 20 oz. by Police officers as

compared with 181 oz. and 98 gr., 1,197 oz., and 270 gr., and 28 oz., and 174 gr., respectively, in the previous year. The total quantity seized in Bengal was 2,023 oz. and 27 gr. as compared with 1,432 oz. and 112 gr. in 1924-25.

Excise offences.

437. The total number of persons arrested on charges under the Excise and Opium laws during the year was 6,282, and of persons convicted, 5,889, as compared with 6,198 and 5,816, respectively, in the previous year.

Road and Public Works Cesses.

[Report on the Land Revenue Administration of Bengal for the year 1925-26.]

Rate.

438. Except in the Chittagong Hill Tracts where the Cess Act is not in force the road and public works cesses continued to be levied at the maximum rate of one anna in the rupee on the valuation of lands and annual net profits of mines and other immovable properties.

Demands and collections.

439. The valuation or gross rental, on which the cesses are based, amounted to Rs. 14,79,77,906 against the land revenue demand of the same area of Rs. 2,78,81,712. The proportion of land revenue to rental value worked out at 18:8 per cent. The total cess demand was Rs. 95,95,077. The current demand showed a net increase of Rs. 2,57,982 over that of the preceding year, contributed mainly by the districts of Burdwan, Bankura and Tippera. The increase in Burdwan was due to the assessment of some new mines and, in other districts, to revaluations. The percentage of total collections on current demand, however, fell to 97·45 against 101·2 of the previous year. The district of Burdwan was mainly responsible for the decrease, which was due to some of the mines having been assessed too late in the year. In the districts of Rajshahi, Noakhali, Howrah, Faridpur, Mymensingh, Pabna, Tippera, Birbhum, Rangpur, Dacca, Malda, the 24-Parganas, Bakarganj and Chittagong, however, the percentage of total collections on current demand exceeded the standard of 100 per cent. The percentage varied from 87·88 to 99·94 in the remaining districts except Burdwan where it was 79·6 only.

Working of the certificate procedure.

440. The total number of certificates filed for the recovery of arrears of cesses was 41,770 against 42,613 in the preceding year. The total number of certificates for disposal including 15,393 of the previous year, amounted to 57,163, of which 42,193 were disposed of and 14,970 left pending at the close of the year. In the majority of cases arrears of cesses were recovered on the issue of notices of

demand or on the issue of notices for the attachment of property. Recourse to actual sale had to be taken only in 767 cases.

Valuation and revaluation.

441. General revaluation operations on a large scale were in progress in the districts of Bankura, Hooghly, Howrah, Nadia, Jessore, Rangpur, Malda and Darjeeling. The assessment of coal mines in the districts of Burdwan and Birbhum and of certain *gazari* forests in Dacca was, as in previous years, revised under Chapter V of the Cess Act. Partial valuations or revaluations were also undertaken in the districts of Burdwan, the 24-Parganas, Faridpur, Bakarganj, Chittagong, Noakhali and Jalpaiguri.

Forest Revenue.

[*See* Chapter IV of this Report—Forests.]

Land Revenue.

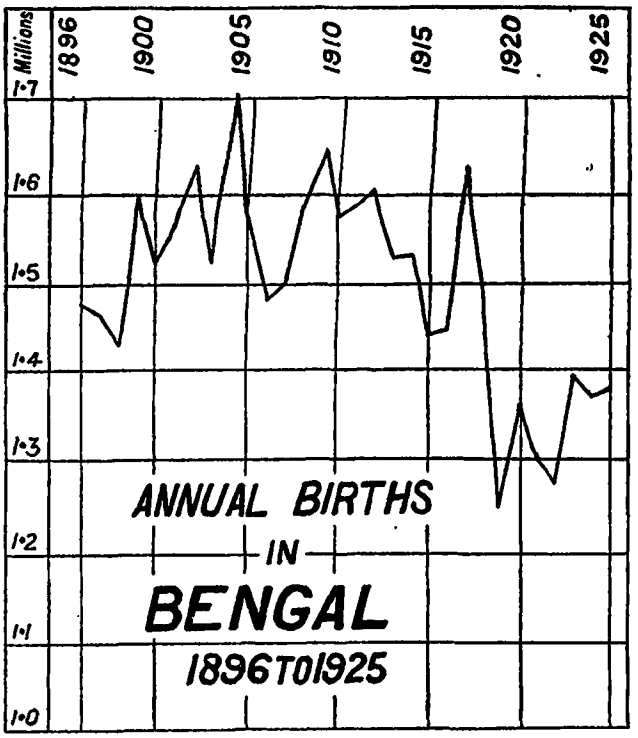
[*See* Chapter II of this Report.]

Canal Revenue.

[*See* Chapter IV of this Report—Canals.]

Municipal Revenue.

[*See* Chapter III of this Report—Municipal Administration.]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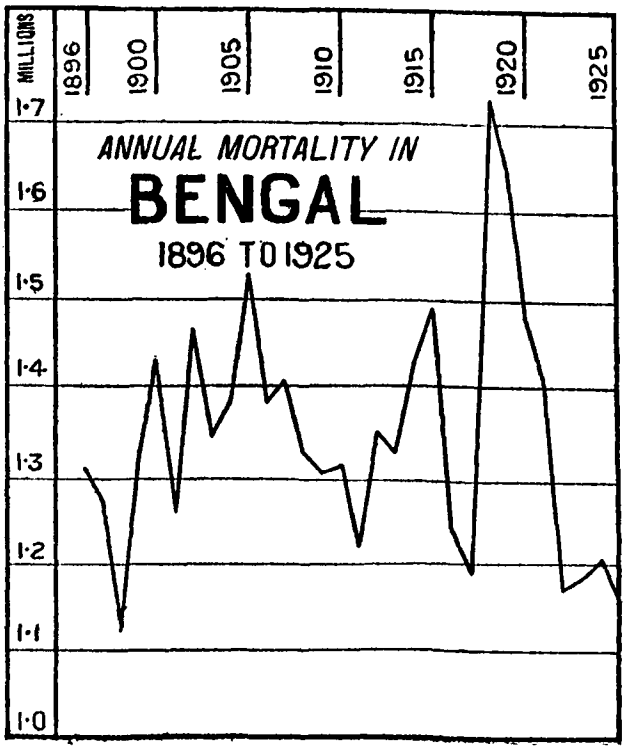
ANNUAL BIRTHS
IN
BENGAL
1896 TO 1925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ANNUAL MORTALITY IN
BENGAL
1896 TO 1925

CHAPTER VI—VITAL STATISTICS AND MEDICAL SERVICE.

Vital Statistics.

[Report of the Director of Public Health, Bengal, for the year 1925.]

Climatic conditions.

442. The total rainfall of the season from May to October was 4, 5, 6 and 20 per cent. below normal in the Presidency, Dacca, Chittagong and Burdwan divisions, respectively, and in excess only in the Rajshahi division by 4 per cent.

Vital statistics General.

443. Among the ten provinces of India, Bengal stood seventh on the list as regards birth-rate and third as regards death-rate. Judged by the rate of natural increase as shown by the excess of births over deaths, it was tenth on the list.

Birth-rate.

444. Altogether 1,377,097 births were recorded giving a birth rate of 29·6 per mille, a figure ·34 per cent. over that of the previous year and 1 per cent. below the average of the previous ten years. As in the previous year, Murshidabad recorded the highest birth-rate, 47·4 per mille, and Calcutta the lowest, 18·9 per mille. One hundred and eight males were born to every 100 females. Compared with the mean of the past ten years, the birth-rate showed an increase in the Burdwan, Presidency and Rajshahi divisions, while in the Dacca and Chittagong divisions it recorded a decline. Thirteen districts exceeded the decennial mean, especially Birbhum and Murshidabad.

Death-rate.

445. A total of 1,158,473 deaths was recorded, giving a death-rate of 24·9 per mille, which is 3·86 per cent. less than that of 1924 and 15·6 per cent. less than the decennial mean. The highest death-rate, 37·4 per mille, was recorded in Rajshahi and the lowest, 16·4 per mille, in Calcutta. Compared with the average death-rate of the previous ten years, there was improvement in every district except Calcutta, the greatest improvement being in Birbhum, Burdwan and Bankura.

Mortality according to sex.

446. A total mortality of 614,736 males and 543,737 females was recorded, giving a death-rate of 25·5 and 24·2 per mille, respectively, and a ratio of 113 males to every 100 females. The male death-rate exceeded the female death-rate in every district except Calcutta, Howrah and Nadia.

Maternal deaths.

447. A total of 2,790 deaths was recorded in 1925 as having occurred within 14 days of labour as against 1,972 in the previous year.

Mortality according to age.

448. About 35 per cent. of the total mortality occurred in children below five years of age and 17·3 per cent. in persons

above 50. With the exception of age periods under one month, 1 to 5 years and above 60 years, the death-rate for every other period was less in 1925 as compared with the previous year.

Mortality according to class.

449. The death-rate among Musalmans exceeded that among the Hindus in the Presidency, Burdwan and Rajshahi divisions, while in the Dacca and Chittagong divisions it was slightly less. Compared with the previous year, there was reduction of mortality among all classes, the highest decrease being among other classes and Buddhists.

Infant mortality.

450. There were 249,582 infant deaths, giving a death-rate of 181·2 per thousand births and showing a decrease of 1·6 per cent. over the previous year. One hundred and fourteen male infants died to every 100 female infants. The proportion borne by infant deaths to the total mortality was 21·5 per cent. The highest death-rate occurred in Calcutta both for male and female infants, and the lowest rates were recorded for males in Chittagong and for females in Tippera.

Excess of births over deaths.

451. The excess of births over deaths was 218,624, givng a natural increase of 4·7 per mille of the total population. Only 4 districts, *viz.*, Calcutta, Jessore, Rajshahi and Rangpur, reported an excess of deaths over births.

Cholera.

452. During the year, 34,276 deaths occurred from cholera, showing a decrease of 32·7 per cent. in the death-rate over that of the previous year. They accounted for 2·9 per cent. of the total mortality, against 4·03 per cent. in the previous year. The Chittagong division showed the highest mortality, followed by the Dacca and Presidency divisions. Among the districts Nadia returned the highest death-rate, 1·3 per mille. In all the districts the rate of mortality was below the decennial mean, except in Rangpur and Chittagong.

Small-pox.

453. There were 17,436 deaths from small-pox, showing an increase of 233·3 per cent. in the rate as compared with that of the previous year and 17·7 as compared with the decennial mean. It accounted for 1·5 per cent. of the total mortality. The death-rate was highest in the Burdwan division, ·80 per mille, and lowest in the Dacca division, ·12 per mille. Among the districts, Calcutta and Howrah reported the highest death-rates, 3·64 and 1·84, respectively, and Jalpaiguri the lowest, ·01 per mille.

Plague.

454. Only 9 deaths were reported from plague, all of which took place in Calcutta.

Fever.

455. The number of reported deaths from fever was 874,228, of which 497,473 were due to malaria, 7,752 to enteric, 3,161 to relapsing fever, 1,146 to measles, 16,766 to kala-azar and the remaining 347,930 to other fevers. The death-rate from fever

was 18·8 per mille and it represented 75·5 per cent. of the total mortality, malaria alone accounting for 10·7 per mille and 56·9 per cent.

Malaria.

456. Deaths from malaria showed a decrease of 5·3 per cent. over the figure of the previous year, the improvement being in the Dacca and Chittagong divisions. Judging from the fever index, Burdwan, Nadia and Murshidabad appear to be the worst sufferers, while Calcutta, Noakhali, Tippera, Bakarganj and Dacca are least affected.

Kala-azar.

457. There were 16,766 deaths reported from kala-azar, giving a death-rate of ·36 per mille, against 0·21 per mille in the previous year. Very high rates of mortality were recorded in towns—Jamalpur, 7·7 per mille; Sherpur, Bogra, 3·3 per mille; and Basirhat, 3·1. Only 31 towns reported no deaths from kala-azar.

Respiratory diseases.

458. A total of 27,325 deaths was reported from respiratory diseases including 1,901 from influenza, 11,259 from pneumonia, 6,079 from phthisis and 8,086 from other respiratory diseases. The death-rate from respiratory diseases was ·59 per mille and they represented 2·4 per cent. of the total mortality. Influenza accounted for 6·9 per cent., pneumonia 41·2 per cent., and phthisis 22·2 per cent. of the total deaths from respiratory diseases.

Dysentery and diarrhœa.

459. Deaths from dysentery and diarrhœa amounted to 21,836, giving a death-rate of ·47 per mille.

Injuries.

460. Deaths from injury numbered 19,950, including 3,315 from suicide, 11,418 from wounds and accidents, 4,913 from snake-bites and attacks of wild animals and 304 from rabies.

Income and expenditure of local authorities.

461. The average expenditure on sanitation per head in municipalities outside Calcutta was Rs. 2-1-7¾, as compared with Rs. 2-1-2¾ in the preceding year. About one-half of the total expenditure on sanitation was spent on conservancy, about one-fourth on water-supply, and about one-fourteenth on medical relief. The average income of District Boards per head was about 4½ annas, of which 14·8 per cent., or about 8 pies per head, was spent on medical relief, sanitation and vaccination.

Emigration.

Inland Emigration.

[Report on Inland Emigration under the Assam Labour and Emigration Act, 1901 (VI of 1901), for the year ending the 30th June 1926.]

Recruitment.

462. The year 1925-26 was an uneventful one in the matter of emigration and there was a further falling off in the number of emigrants despatched to the labour districts.

Recruiting operations in Bengal were conducted as usual in the districts of Bankura, Birbhum, Burdwan and Midnapore. The number of garden sardars employed during the year was 512, as against 215 in the preceding year. All worked under the supervision of licensed local agents. The number of local agents' licenses was 27, as against 18 issued in the previous year. The total number of emigrants recruited in Bengal was 816, as against 406 in the preceding year. The largest number of recruits was from Midnapore, *viz.*, 650. The total number of recruits from Bengal and other provinces embarking at Goalundo was 9,426, as compared with 12,625 in the preceding year.

The rest house for emigrants at Goalundo, maintained by the Tea Districts Labour Association, was duly inspected and found to be satisfactory. Arrangements for river transport were satisfactory. There was no death amongst the emigrants at the halting stations at Asansol, Kharagpur and Naihati. Of the 9,442 emigrants who arrived at Goalundo from the recruiting districts in and outside the Presidency of Bengal, 8 deserted, 6 were released and 3 died. There was no case of death or desertion amongst the emigrants during their journeys by steamer from Goalundo or by railway from Chandpur to their final destination.

In connection with the transport of labour to Assam, receipts amounted to Rs. 650, as against Rs. 1,796 in the preceding year, while the expenditure fell from Rs. 13,595-6-2 to Rs. 12,352-5-0.

Foreign Emigration.

463. There was no emigration of skilled or unskilled labour from this Presidency to countries overseas during the year under report.

Medical Relief.

[Triennial Report on the Working of Hospitals and Dispensaries in Bengal, 1925-26.]

Calcutta Hospitals and Dispensaries.

Number of institutions.

464. During the triennium, 5 new dispensaries were opened and 4 dispensaries of the 24-Parganas added to the list of Calcutta institutions owing to the extension of the municipal area of the city. The Entally dispensary having been amalgamated with another institution, the total number came up to 32. In the indoor hospitals the total number of beds increased from 2,857 in 1922 to 3,086. One hundred and thirty-three additional beds were provided in the Marwari Hospital, 34 in the Carmichael Hospital and 40 in the Calcutta Medical Institute Hospital.

Attendance and admissions.

465. The total number of indoor patients treated in the Calcutta hospitals was 40,755, 43,055 and 45,952, respectively, during the three years. The increase is attributed to the progressive increase in the number of beds. The death-rate also recorded an increase, from 11·26 per cent. in 1923 to 12·11 per cent. in 1924 and 12·41 per cent. in 1925. The total number of out-patients showed an excess of 70,120 over the corresponding figure of the previous triennium. The increase is ascribed to the abolition of all charges in the Campbell, Sambhu Nath Pandit, Presidency General and Medical College Hospitals. The largest attendance was as usual at the Medical College Hospitals, the Chandney Hospital occupying the second position.

Nursing.

466. The nursing arrangements at the Presidency Hospital continued to be satisfactory. The new quarters for nurses at the Medical College Hospitals were opened in May, 1923, and the old building was remodelled later. The improved condition of the nurses' quarters accounted for the increase in the number of applications for both general and maternity training during the last 3 years.

Finance.

467. The total receipts of Class I, III and IV institutions amounted to Rs. 88,80,529 during the triennium, as against a total income of Rs. 87,72,883 in the preceding 3 years. Government contributions amounted to Rs. 55,15,557, or nearly 62 per cent., and of this Rs. 50,80,702 were spent on the State institutions. Subscriptions and donations came up to Rs. 3,72,634. The municipal contributions to the Campbell and the Sambhu Nath Pandit Hospitals remained the same throughout the triennium. The total cost of maintenance of the Calcutta Hospitals, excluding investments, was Rs. 83,96,705 during the period, as compared with Rs. 86,14,712 in the preceding 3 years.

District Hospitals and Dispensaries.

Number of institutions.

468. During the triennium, 239 new dispensaries were opened, 10 closed and 4 transferred to the Calcutta list. There was thus a net increase of 225 dispensaries, as against 94 during the previous triennium. The total number of beds in the district hospitals was 5,309, or 383 more than in the preceding 3 years.

Nursing.

469. The nursing arrangements in most of the mufassal hospitals remained unsatisfactory as in the preceding triennium. As usual, the nursing was generally left to the relations of

patients or hospital dressers or compounders, ward coolies or probationary nurses. The Suri Sadar Hospital took the initiative in arranging for the training of male nurses.

Attendance.

470. Altogether 21,572,385 patients received treatment in areas outside Calcutta during the past 3 years, as compared with 21,845,791 during the preceding triennium. The number of indoor patients was 1,99,112 during the three years, against 204,408, the Dacca Mitford Hospital treating the largest number. The total number of out-patients was 21,373,273, the corresponding figure for the previous triennium being 21,641,383.

Diseases.

471. Malaria accounted for nearly one-third of the total number of patients. Treatment by injection of quinine salts met with satisfactory results in combating this disease. The number of patients treated for kala-azar increased during the triennium from 30,325 to 230,957, which might be attributed to the better knowledge of the disease, readier methods of diagnosis and greater popularity of the intravenous treatment with antimony preparations.

Finance.

472. The actual receipts of Class I, III and IV institutions amounted to Rs. 19,77,842, Rs. 21,63,840 and Rs. 21,39,261, respectively, during the three years, and the expenditure to Rs. 18,30,417, Rs. 19,54,287 and Rs. 20,94,373. Over 48 per cent. of the income was derived from local funds, 16 per cent. from subscriptions and donations, 13 per cent. from Provincial revenues and 11 per cent. from municipal funds.

General.

473. An outstanding event of the triennium was the establishment of a Pasteur Institute in Calcutta in 1924, with a view to provide increased facilities for anti-rabic treatment. The Indian Research Fund Association financed during this period a number of special enquiries at the Calcutta School of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene. A scheme for the establishment of a Dental School in connection with the Medical College Hospitals was approved but could not be proceeded with for want of funds. The establishment of a Dental Department at the Presidency General Hospitals was sanctioned in 1925, and the buildings for an Extern Maternity Department at the Medical College Hospitals were completed and opened.

The desirability in every district town of a large, fully equipped hospital is unquestionable. How and to what extent and on what conditions the local people can be assisted by Government to provide such hospitals, without, at the same time, lessening the responsibility of local bodies in the matter is a problem for which a solution will have to be found.

Eden Sanitarium, Darjeeling.

[Report of the Eden Sanitarium and Hospital for 1925.]

General.

474. The Eden Sanitarium and Eden Hospital were founded for the benefit of Europeans residing in the Lower Provinces and elsewhere, who are unable to obtain in their homes the care and attention which they require when overtaken by sickness or accident.

Number of patients.

475. As usual, the Sanitarium remained open from the 1st April to the 6th November. There was an increase in the number of admissions from 363 to 398, which is attributable to the reduction of charges in the Sanitarium and to its popularity. The total number of patients treated in the hospital was 115, of whom 107 were cured and 8 died.

Finance.

476. The usual grant of Rs. 1,500 for the maintenance of free beds was made by Government. There was a decrease in receipts from donations and entertainments, and though the working of the year gave a profit of Rs. 3,667, the balance sheet still shows that liabilities exceed assets by more than Rs. 10,400.

Mental Hospitals.

[Report of the Mental Hospitals in Bengal for the year 1925.]

General.

477. The construction of the Indian Mental Hospital at Ranchi was completed during the year. The transfer of patients from the Berhampore Mental Hospital to Ranchi was completed on the 16th November, 1925, when that hospital was closed, and that from the Dacca Mental Hospital was begun in December.

Population, admission and discharge.

478. The total capacity of the Mental Hospitals in Bengal, including the Observation Ward at Bhowanipore and the Mental Ward at the Gobra Leper Asylum, before the closing of the Mental Hospitals at Dacca and Berhampore, was the same as in the previous year, *viz.*, 1,147. The total hospital population was 1,201 as compared with 1,172 in 1924, but the daily average strength decreased to 914·19 from 977·05. The maximum number confined in one night was 1,044, as compared with 1,023 in 1924. Two hundred and seven patients were admitted in 1925, as against 224 in 1924. Excluding 903 patients transferred during the year to the Mental Hospital at Ranchi, the number of persons discharged was 154, as compared with 123 in the previous year.

Health of patients.

479. The daily average of sick patients in hospitals in 1925 fell to 72·03, as compared with 89·01 in the previous year. The mortality in 1925 was 53, being 5·79 per cent. of the daily average strength, as compared with 5·62 in the year before.

Sanitation.

[Bengal Sanitary Board's Report and the Report of the Chief Engineer, Public Health Department, Bengal, for the year 1925.]

Sanitary Board.

480. During the year the constitution of the Board remained the same as in the previous year. The Board held four meetings in Calcutta. They recommended four water-supply schemes to Government for administrative approval and four other water-supply schemes and one sewerage scheme for final sanction. In the case of Brahmanbaria water-supply scheme, they recommended to Government a grant of Rs. 2,550, subject to certain conditions. The Board also supervised the four anti-malarial schemes at Meenglas, Singaran-Toposi, Jangipur and Banka Valley.

Sanitary Engineering.

481. Sixteen schemes were under construction during the year under the supervision of the Chief Engineer, Public Health Department, including eleven water-supply schemes at Dacca, Comilla, Rangamati, Chandpur, Burdwan, Raniganj, Midnapore, Bankura, Suri, Serampur and Kalimpong, four sewerage schemes at Tittaghar, Kurseong and Dacca, a sanitation scheme for the Armed Reserve Police Lines at Burdwan, two tube wells at Bogra and at English Bazar, and three experimental tube wells at North Dum-Dum, Tamluk and Jhargram. Seven sketch projects, including three water-supply schemes, for Rishra-Konnagar, Naihati and Satkhira, four drainage schemes—one for the Chatra Ward of the Serampur Municipality—and three alternative schemes for the Dinajpur town were prepard. Thirteen detailed schemes were drawn up, including eight water-supply schemes, for Narayanganj, Pabna, Naihati, Kotrung, Khulna, Patuakhali, Jessore and Bhatpara, three drainage schemes for Dacca, Bhatpara and Budge Budge, and two schemes for the improvement of the sanitation of the Munshiganj town and the Gurkha Guards' quarters at Government House, Darjeeling. A scheme in connection with the Howrah Water-works and the water-supply scheme of the Asansol Municipality, prepared by the local authorities, were also examined.

The total number of water-works under operation remained the same as in the previous year. The total capital expenditure on construction of water-works during the year was Rs. 6,81,452 and on drainage projects Rs. 4,08,369.

Vaccination.

[Annual Statistical Returns and Short Notes on Vaccination in Bengal for the year 1925-26.]

482. The total number of vaccinations performed was 3,030,178, including 1,751,091 primary and 1,279,087 re-vaccinations, or an increase of 95,890 in primary vaccinations and 271,322 in revaccinations. Free and compulsory vaccination was introduced during the year in all the rural areas, except in Darjeeling and the Chittagong Hill Tracts. The small-pox epidemic of 1924-25 was not so severe as the previous one of 1919-20 and was confined mostly to Calcutta and its neighbouring districts. The Bengal Public Health Department helped the local bodies by deputing the staff at their disposal of Sub-Assistant Surgeons, Sanitary Inspectors and Special Inspectors of Vaccination to their aid as had been done in the previous year. The local Government sanctioned a contribution of Rs. 25,000 to the District Boards to assist in free vaccination.

The Poisons Act.

[Report on the Working of the Poisons Act for the year 1925.]

483. Two hundred and sixty-one licenses were current during the year throughout the Presidency, excluding Calcutta, as against 270 in the previous year. Of these, 117 were issued under section 2 and 144 under section 4, as compared with 115 and 155, respectively, in the year 1924. In Calcutta, the total number of licenses issued under both the sections was 363, against 273 in the preceding year. There were 49 prosecutions under the Act, of which 45 were in Calcutta and the remaining 4 in the mufassal. There were 3 convictions for cattle poisoning in 24-Parganas.

Health of the Port of Calcutta.

484. The number of inward bound vessels inspected in the port was 1,096 and that of outward bound vessels 1,136, while the number of crews and passengers were—

	Inward.	Outward.
Crew	100,445	107,160
Passengers	100,942	116,819

485. There were four deaths among European seamen in hospitals, while there were seventy cases of venereal diseases. The total number of deaths among the Asiatic population was reported to be 90, of which 23 were from accidents, 17 from injuries, 12 from drowning and 38 from natural causes.

486. Seventeen cases of infectious diseases were found on incoming vessels during the year. The patients were removed to hospitals and necessary precautionary measures were taken.

Health of the Port of Chittagong.

487. The total number of ships inspected was 234, against 225 in the previous year, and the number of crews and passengers examined were—

	Inward.	Outward.
Crew	16,199	3,148
Passengers	64,345	..

488. There was no case of cholera, small-pox or plague on any vessel lying in the port.

CHAPTER VII—INSTRUCTION.

General System of Public Instruction.

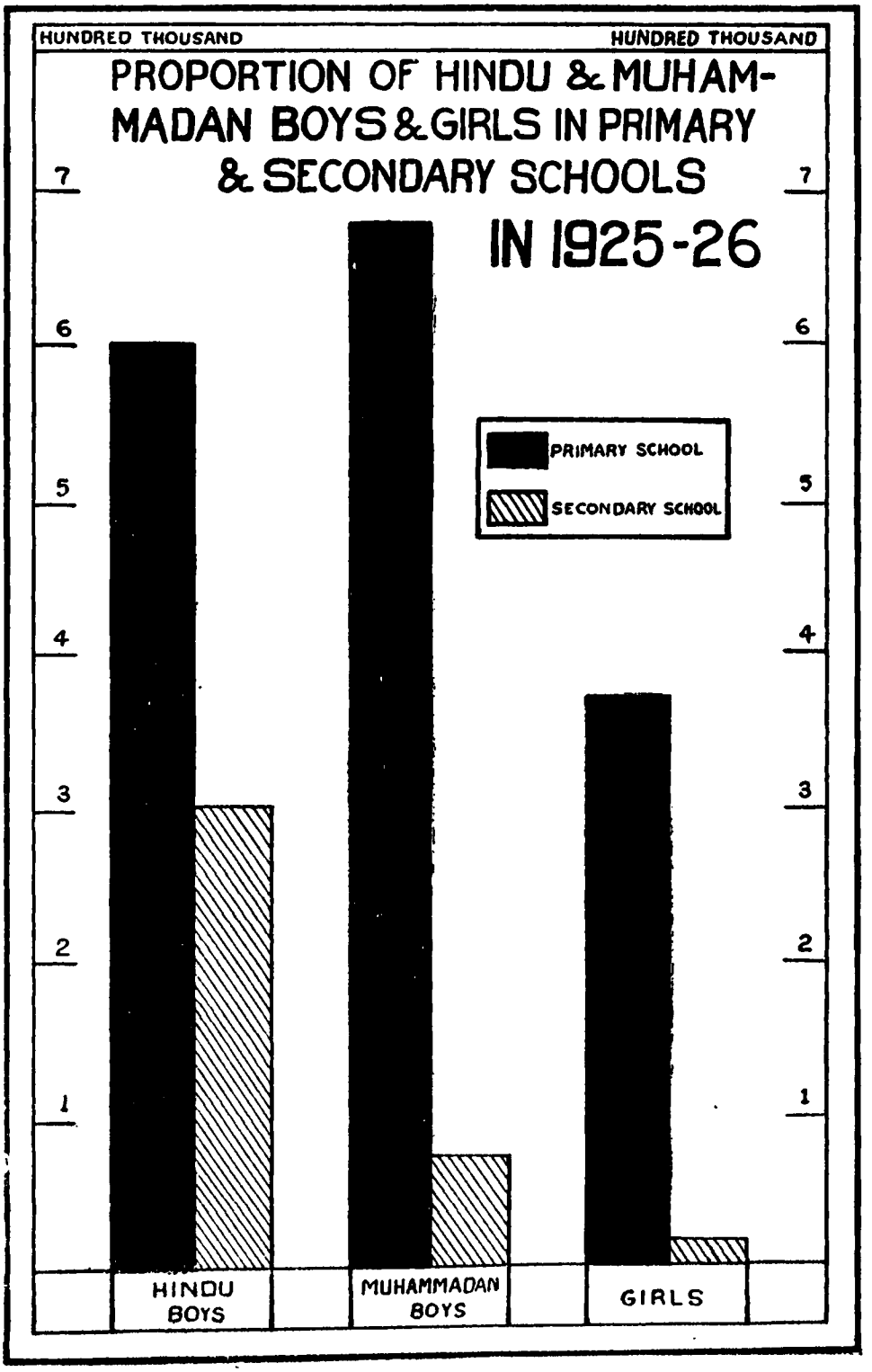
See General Administration Report for 1921-22, Part II, pages 276—289.

EDUCATION.

[Progress of Education in Bengal, 1925-26.]

Educational institutions, pupils, and expenditure.

489. During the year under review the total number of institutions increased by 805. Recognised institutions increased in number from 55,890 in 1924-25 to 56,549 in 1925-26, and unrecognised institutions from 1,283 to 1,429. The number of pupils in these institutions rose from 2,150,942 to 2,222, 012, of whom 1,824,942 were males and 397,070 females as compared with 1,770,472 and 380,470, respectively, in the preceding year. The total expenditure on public instruction amounted to about Rs. 377 lakhs, of which Rs. 144 lakhs were received from Provincial revenues, Rs. 15 lakhs and Rs. 4 lakhs from District and Municipal funds, respectively, Rs. 15 lakhs from fees and Rs. 59 lakhs from other private sources. An additional allotment of Rs. 3 lakhs was made available from Provincial revenues for new and increased grants-in-aid to secondary schools for improving of the pay and prospects of teachers. A further sum of Rs. 20,000 was distributed in grants-in-aid for the improvement of non-Government Arts Colleges. The Dacca University received a Statutory recurring grant of 5½ lakhs, which helped greatly to stabilise its finances. The post-graduate departments of the University of Calcutta were also placed on a more stable basis by a recurring grant of Rs. 3 lakhs. To test public opinion on the question of the imposition of a cess for making primary education free and compulsory in the rural areas, conferences of Government officials and representative local non-officials were held during the year in the five Divisions. The necessity for making a move of some comprehensive character in the matter was generally accepted while many agreed to the necessity of a special cess. The revised curriculum for maktabs, mention of which was made in the last report, was introduced in all the districts of the Presidency. A noteworthy event was the acceptance by the Secretary of State for India of the recommendation of the Lee Commission to provincialise the posts now included in all-India services operating in the transferred field of administration. The building of the new Islamia College, Calcutta, was completed and became ready for occupation before the close of the year under report. Three State scholarships of the value of £300 a year each, tenable for 3 years


HUNDRED THOUSAND
HUNDRED THOUSAND
PROPORTION OF HINDU & MUHAMMADAN BOYS & GIRLS IN PRIMARY & SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN 1925-26
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
PRIMARY SCHOOL
SECONDARY SCHOOL
HINDU BOYS
MUHAMMADAN BOYS
GIRLS

for study in the United Kingdom, were created, of which two are to be awarded every other year and one triennially. The question of the revision of the Matriculation Examination Regulations including that for the total abolition of the age-limit was still under the consideration of Government. There was a growing recognition on the part of the educated public of the importance of physical training in the schools and colleges, and a steady development of the Boy Scout movement was a marked feature of the year.

Collegiate education.

490. The number of Arts Colleges for men, excluding University classes with 1,584 students, was 38, the increase being due to the opening of the Imperial Salimullah College at Dacca. Of these, 8 were maintained by Government and the rest were under the control of private bodies. The total number of students in these colleges rose from 21,919 to 23,153. The number of colleges for women remained the same as in the previous year, *viz.*, 4, including the Intermediate Department of the Eden High School of Dacca. The average cost of educating a student in an Arts College was Rs. 145-1-4 per annum, of which Government contributed Rs. 57-12-5. The total expenditure on Arts Colleges for men amounted to Rs. 32,57,591 of which Rs. 12,38,456 was met from Provincial revenues, Rs. 8,000 from Municipal funds Rs. 1,797,078 from fees and Rs. 214,057 from other sources. No meeting of the Advisory Committee for Higher Education was held during the year. Provident Funds for teachers with a contribution of 8⅓ per cent. from University funds were started for the post-graduate departments of the Calcutta University and also for the Dacca University. The clearing out of the insanitary *bustees* round the college was undertaken with a view to provide for its future expansion.

Secondary education.

491. The number of secondary schools for Indian boys rose from 2,566 to 2,647. The high and middle English schools increased by 37 and 50, respectively, while of the middle vernacular schools 6 more went out of existence. In the number of pupils there was an increase in high and middle English schools by 12,701 and 9,351, respectively, and decrease in middle vernacular schools by 106. The steady elimination of middle vernacular schools from the educational system is attributed to the unpopularity of purely vernacular education. The expenditure on these schools amounted to more than one crore of rupees, of which about Rs. 82 lakhs were met from private funds. The amount, however, is not nearly enough for a good type of secondary education and it can only be hoped that any increase of funds would be concentrated on an improvement of the existing schools rather than in their extension.

The question of extending the jurisdiction of the Board of Intermediate Secondary Education, Dacca, is under consideration of Government. The attempts made by the Board to raise the standards of the institutions within its jurisdiction have not met with much success. Such atempts have often resulted in only scaring students away to institutions outside the Board area.

Primary education.

492. The number of primary schools for Indian boys rose from 37,071 to 37,124 while the number of pupils reading in them rose from 1,309,556 to 1,332,287. Approximately 5·9 per cent. of the Hindu male population and 5·4 per cent. of the Muhammadan male population were in primary schools at the close of the year under report. The total cost of maintaining these schools amounted to Rs. 51,77,162, of which 47·86 per cent. was met from public funds and 52·14 per cent. from private sources. Funds were allotted during the year for the construction of 178 Panchayati Union schools for boys. A recurring sum of Rs. 1,00,000 was available for the introduction in Municipal and Union Board areas of schemes of free primary education on the basis of the scheme prepared by Mr. Biss, and 19 schemes were sanctioned by Government during the year under review. There were 429 primary schools in Calcutta at the end of the year, of which 68 were free and maintained by the Corporation.

Training of male teachers.

493. At the close of the year there were 99 institutions for the training of male teachers for Indian schools, *viz.*, 2 colleges, 6 normal schools and 91 guru and muallim training schools. The two training colleges at Calcutta and Dacca, which are maintained by Government, passed 99 students in the B.T. and 18 in the L.T. Examinations, the normal schools passed 146 students and the guru and muallim training schools 1,154 students. The rate of stipends payable to students under training in normal schools was raised from Rs. 6 to Rs. 10 a month and 79 stipends which had been held in abeyance owing to lack of funds were restored during the year. The question of the reorganisation of the normal schools restricting the admission to matriculates and the course to two years is still under consideration.

Professional and technical education.

Bengal Engineering College, Sibpur.

494. The Bengal Engineering College had 294 pupils on its rolls in the Civil Engineering, Mechanical and Electrical Engineering, Mining and Industrial Departments. The posts of Professor of Physics, Foreman in the Electrical Department and Demonstrator in the Mechanical Department were created during the year and filled up. A Professor of Civil Engineering was also appointed. The Governing Body of the College submitted proposals for increasing the fee rates and for adjusting the system of scholarships in the

various departments of the College. Twenty-one candidates passed the B.E., and 24 the I.E., Examination during the year under report.

Ahsanullah School of Engineering, Dacca.

495. The Ahsanullah School of Engineering, Dacca, had 428 students on the rolls. In order to cope with the increased number of students the duplication of the overseer classes was sanctioned as a permanent measure with effect from the beginning of the session. The school passed 157 students in the Upper Subordinate and 35 in the Lower Subordinate Examinations.

Government Commercial Institute, Calcutta.

496. The Government Commerical Institute, Calcutta, had 181 students on its rolls. It passed 17 students in the Final Commercial Course Examination and 172 students in the Special Examination. Some important changes were effected in the syllabuses of the various courses of study followed at the Institute.

Education of Indian girls and Women.

497. The number of recognised institutions of all grades and types for Indian girls increased from 13,494 to 13,922 and the number of pupils attending them from 317,873 to 332,099. There were 254 unrecognised schools which had 6,588 pupils on their rolls. Nine candidates appeared at the I.A. Examination and all were successful. The Nari-Sikha Samiti and the Society for the Improvement of the Backward Classes continued to do useful work in connection with the expansion of primary education among girls. Fourteen women teachers passed the B.T. Examination from the Training Class attached to the Diocesan College and the Loreto House turned out 6 L.T. teachers. The number of institutions for the training of women teachers of lower grades was 10, of which 7 were managed by Christian and Brahmo Missions. The standard of needle-work in girls' schools has improved under the guidance of trained mistresses, to which Lady Carmichael Needle-work Diploma has no doubt acted as a stimulus. The number of girls reading in boys' schools rose from 54,907 to 57,043.

With the growth of female education there has arisen a feeling which becomes more widespread every year that secondary education for girls should not follow blindly that given to boys and that its scope should not be restricted with the limits of the Calcutta University Matriculation Examination. Experiments in escaping from these limits will be watched with sympathetic interest.

Education of Europeans and Anglo-Indians.

498. The number of institutions for the education of Europeans and Anglo-Indians was the same as in the preceding year, *viz.*, 63. A revised code of Regulations has been drawn up for European schools in Bengal and is under consideration. The Dalton Laboratory Plan, which was given a trial in St. Paul's

School, Darjeeling, the Diocesan School, Darjeeling, and the Pratt Memorial School, Calcutta, has been discarded as unsuited to existing conditions. Two European male teachers were deputed for training to the Chelmsford Training Class at Ghora Gali, Punjab, as there are no such facilities for training them in this Presidency. Special classes for probationary sick nurses were held at Entally Convent, Loreto House, Calcutta, and St. Andrew's Colonial Homes, Kalimpong. The latter also had special classes for children's nurses and Telegraph Training. An additional course in salesmanship has been elaborated in consultation with Miss F. E. Hawkins, Employment Secretary, Calcutta Y. W. C. A., and approved by the Calcutta Trades Association. The draft course is now under consideration.

Education of Muhammadans.

499. The number of Muhammadan pupils studying in all types of educational institutions for Indians rose by 33,773. The proportion of Muhammadan pupils to the total number of pupils was 47·6 per cent., but it was only 15 per cent. of those at the high school stage and 13·7 per cent. at the college stage. These figures show how much the Muhammadans still lag behind in higher and secondary education. A healthy sign, however, is the increase in the number of reformed madrassahs all over the Province. Compared with primary schools maktabs show a more rapid increase both in numbers and pupils and a revised curriculum on the lines of that for primary schools was brought into force. Provision was made for text books in Urdu in selected maktabs where Urdu formed the medium of instruction. Out of 201 candidates who appeared at the Islamic Matriculation Examination conducted by the Dacca Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education 100 were successful. Thirty-one candidates sat for the Islamic Intermediate Examination. Four special scholarships of Rs. 15 a month each were created by Government for Moslem students of the Ahsanullah School of Engineering. Seven scholarships of Rs. 5 a month each were also sanctioned for candidates from junior madrassahs. The buildings of the Islamic College, Calcutta, accommodating 400 students were completed. Definite rules regulating the appointment of Muhammadans to Education services under Government were laid down by the Governor in Council.

Literature and the Press.

The Bengal Library and working of Act XXV of 1867.

500. The total number of publications registered was 4,623 of which 3,258 were books and 1,365 periodicals. Of the former 3,011 were original publications and 247 republications and translations. There were 55 new periodicals published of which 11 were in English and 36 in Bengali.

The Press.

501. The total number of newspapers and periodicals, both English and vernacular, printed and published during the year was 632. Of these 383 were published in Calcutta. There were 347 publications in Bengali, 173 in English and the remainder in other languages.

One hundred and twenty-seven newspapers and periodicals were started and 169 ceased to exist.

Literary Publications.

502. There was a slight decrease in publications in 1925 but their general standard was much the same.

Two dramatic productions of note were Sir Rabindra Nath Tagore's "Griha Prabes" (Entering the House) which was a great success on the stage and "Atma Darsan" (Self-Realisation) of Babu Mahatap Chandra Ghosh, an allegory of mind's pilgrimage through trials and temptations towards beatitude.

Fiction continued to flourish and mostly dealt with social problems of the day.

The historical publications of the year were more varied and important than those of the previous year. Some of the best came from outside Bengal but with one exception these were works of Bengali scholars.

The literature on Art showed signs of growing interest in the subject and there were some useful publications on Economics.

Proscriptions and prosecutions.

503. Five books, one newspaper, one pamphlet and one picture were forfeited during the year. The editor of the *Bogura Katha* was warned for publishing anti-Islamic articles. Similar warnings were also issued to the editors of *Swatantra*, *Biswamitra*, *Hanafi*, *Moslem Darpan* and *Arya Jiban* for objectionable articles. There were no prosecutions.

Topics discussed in the press.

504. During the year under review, the Indian papers contained little concerning the normal life and interests of the middle classes which constitute the reading public of Bengal. The tyrannies of social custom and the economic difficulties of the people hardly evoked any serious discussion. Religion, except in its purely militant aspect, education and questions of rural and civic betterment received little or no attention. By focussing all its energy on a hectic abuse of Government the Press in Bengal has greatly missed its opportunities for solid work in the life of the people. Nor can there be any question that the Press has acted as one of the most potent factors in keeping alive terrorist activities. By constantly holding up the political détenus as ill-used heroes and by singing the praises of the old revolutionaries it not only encourages those who are under restraint to believe themselves

to be martyrs to the cause of their country, thereby dissuading them from changing their attitude, but also acts as an incitement to others to follow their example.

Literary Societies.

See General Administration Report for 1921-22, Part II, pages 293—295.

ARTS AND SCIENCES.

Government School of Art, Calcutta.

505. The Government School of Art, Calcutta, had on its rolls 354 students on 31st March, 1926, against 361 in the previous year. Of these 207 belonged to the Elementary Department, 39 to the Industrial Department, 33 to the Draftsman Department, 73 to the Fine Arts Department and 2 to the Teachers' Department. Of the students 333 were Hindus and 14 Muhammadans; the rest belonged to other communities. The maintenance charges of the school amounted to Rs. 67,123 of which Rs. 53,934 was provided from Provincial revenues. The establishment of a Commercial Art Section in the School, on an experimental basis, for a period of two years was sanctioned by Government during the year under review.

Government Art Gallery, Calcutta.

506. The practice of lending to the Government School of Art, selected specimens of art objects from the Gallery, useful as examples to students, has been continued. The Gallery has also been used regularly by students from other art institutions, as well as by local artisans and others from various parts of India. The up-keep of the Art Gallery cost Rs. 7,932.

Other Schools of Art.

507. There weer 4 other Schools of Art with 183 pupils in the Presidency. Grants aggregating Rs. 21,671 were given to three of these institutions during the year under report.

Industrial Education.

508. An account of the progress of industrial education will be found in the section on the work of the Director of Industries, included in Chapter IV of this report.

CHAPTER VIII—MISCELLANEOUS.

See General Administration Report for 1921-22, Part II, pages 298-301.

Ecclesiastical.

Establishment.

509. The Ecclesiastical Establishment in Bengal during the year 1925-26, paid entirely or in part by Government, consisted of the Lord Bishop of Calcutta, the Archdeacon of Calcutta, the Domestic Chaplain to the Bishop, the Registrar of the Diocese, 12 Chaplains of the Church of England, 9 Clergymen of the Additional Clergy or other societies, 5 Chaplains of the Church of Scotland, the Most Revd. Archbishop Dr. Ferdinand Perier, S.J., and 4 Priests of the Roman Catholic Church.

Hedjaz Pilgrims.

510. The Port of Calcutta was opened to pilgrim traffic to the Hedjaz during the year. A Protector of Pilgrims was appointed to make arrangements for the pilgrims during their stay in Calcutta. In the outgoing season of 1926, a Lady Protector was appointed to attend to the needs of the female pilgrims and special constables were posted at the railway stations to direct the pilgrims to the places where they could find accommodation. Arrangements were also made for their vaccination by male and female vaccinators for protection against an outbreak of small-pox.

511. Several factors, however, operated against a successful season. Apart from the fact that the announcement as to the opening of the Port was delayed, the serious riots which broke out in Calcutta in April, and false rumours of cheaper passages from Bombay served to divert a considerable amount of the traffic to that port. The result was that the sailings which had been originally arranged on the anticipation of a much larger traffic than was forthcoming could not be adhered to, and eventually only two pilgrim ships left Calcutta on the 6th and 8th May, respectively, with a total of 884 pilgrims.

Chemical Examiner's Department.

[Report of the Chemical Examiner for the year 1925.]

General.

512. Major T. C. Boyd, I.M.S., remained in charge of the department up to the 19th September, 1925, after which Dr. Hiralal Sinha, First Assistant Chemical Examiner, took his place.

Analitical cases.

513. During the year the total number of articles examined was 6,378, showing an increase of 959 over the figure for the previous year. In the General Analytical Department, 2,223 examinations were made, as compared with 1,642 in the previous year. The increase was mainly due to the larger number of cocaine cases received from the Chief Presidency Magistrate, Calcutta, and from the Excise Departments of Bengal, Assam and Bihar and Orissa. One hundred and three articles in connection with cases of forging currency notes and 15 articles in connection with counterfeit coining cases were examined during the year.

Medico-legal cases.

514. The number of medico-legal cases referred to this department for examination during 1925 was 1,896, as against 1,816 in 1924. The number of human poisoning cases investigated was 940, showing an increase of 30 over that of the previous year. Animal poisoning cases showed a decrease of 20, while in stain cases there was an increase of 69.

515. The percentage of detection in human poisoning cases was 36·70, as compared with 35·54 in 1924, while in animal cases the percentage decreased from 64·64 to 56·52 during the year.

Veterinary Department.

[Annual Report of the Veterinary College and the Civil Veterinary Department for the year 1925-26.]

Bengal Veterinary College.

516. During the year there was a marked falling-off in the number of students on the rolls of the Bengal Veterinary College, the number at the end of the session being 100, as against 143, 139, 137 and 132 in the four preceding years. The number of Bengal students declined from 49 to 29 in the year under review. The falling-off in the number of Bengal students appears to have been due chiefly to the failure of District Boards to employ veterinary graduates up to the prescribed standard and to the stoppage of stipends granted by Government in pursuance of the recommendations of the Bengal Retrenchment Committee.

College Hospital.

517. The number of patients treated and operated on during the year at the College Hospital rose from 2,088 to 2,587 and 218 to 296, respectively. There was a corresponding increase in the fee receipts from Rs. 30,038 to Rs. 30,820.

Glanders and Farcy Act.

518. All stables in the Calcutta Glanders area were regularly inspected by the Inspectors. Altogether 120 horses were seized and kept under observation, of which 35 died of Glanders and Surra, 49 were destroyed for those diseases, and the rest discharged as free from them. In the mufassal deaths from Glanders were 26, against 16 in the preceding year.

Civil Veterinary Department.

519. There was an increase in the mortality among animlas from contagious diseases during the year, the total number of deaths reported being 33,224, against 21,901 in the preceding year. Of the total number of deaths, rinderpest, which was prevalent throughout the province, was responsible for 24,695 against 19,088 in the previous year, or 74 per cent. of the total mortality, The total number of cattle inoculated was 173,762, against 136,448 in the previous year. The number of deaths among inoculated cattle was 972, or 0·5 per cent. of the total. The immunity secured by the serum simultaneous inoculation was put to a practical test during the outbreak of rinderpest at the Rangpur Cattle Farm in the year under report when the animals which were inoculated remained altogether immune from the disease.

Dispensaries.

520. Two new dispensaries were opened by local bodies during the year, bringing the total to 43. The total number of patients treated in these dispensaries was 51,025, against 47,260 in the preceding year.

Raymond Research Laboratory.

521. Useful work continued to be done in the Laboratory attached to the Bengal Veterinary College in such matters as the examination of brains of animals for rabies and pathological specimens, diagnosis of infectious diseases of animals, preparation of auto-vaccines, etc.

Zoological Garden, Calcutta.

[Annual Report of the Honorary Committee for the year 1925-26.]

Finance and Statistics.

522. The total receipts of the garden rose from Rs. 1,14,553,6-10 to Rs. 1,27,911-5-4 and the expenditure from Rs. 100,269-14-0 to Rs. 1,13,694-11-7, leaving a closing balance of Rs. 14,216-9-9. During the year the visitors to the garden numbered 1,030,647, showing an increase of 87,094 as compared with the preceding year. The gate money realised rose from Rs. 67,706-13 to Rs. 72,500-10. The garden was, as usual, open free to the public one day in each month, and 38,947 persons visited the garden on those days, as against 41,034 in the preceding year.

Administration of the Cinematograph Act.

523. The Bengal Board of Film Censors held 12 meetings during the year and certified 738 films. Six hundred and ninety-three films were examined by the Inspector of the Board. Certificates were refused for 6 films, and 63 were passed after objected portions had been excised.

524. An attempt was made during the year to tighten up control over cinema theatres by the appointment of an Assistant Inspector of Films whose main duty was to inspect theatres and peripatetic shows, with a view to see that they observed the rules. The whole question of the control and censorship of films is now under the consideration of Government.

Administration of the Indian Electricity Act, 1910.

525. During the year under report no license for the supply of electrical energy was granted or revoked by Government under the Electricity Act. The two applications for license—one from the Chittagong Engineering and Electric Supply Company, Ltd., and the other from the East India Electric Supply and Traction Company, Ltd., which had been pending from the previous year—were still under the consideration of Government, while three fresh applications for license for the supply of energy at Kamarhati-Agarpara and Belghoria, Narayanganj and Serajganj were received during the year.

526. The Dacca Electric Supply Company, Ltd., completed the installation of plant and brought the new sub-station into operation in the extended area of supply. Considerable progress was made by the Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation, Ltd., in the construction of their new power station at Garden Reach and in the extension of mains. The East India Electric Supply and Traction Company, Ltd., made considerable progress in their project of receiving electrical energy in bulk from Gouripore for distribution in the Hooghly-Chinsura area. Further extension of time was granted for the completion of the compulsory works in connection with the Burdwan Electric License, 1920, and the progress made towards the close of the year was satisfactory.

527. An application from the Bengal Iron Company, Ltd., for permission to supply electricity in bulk under section 28(*1*) of the Act from their power station at Kulti to the Maharaja of Cossimbazar's Begunia Colliery was entertained and sanctioned.

528. There were 12 accidents in connection with the generation, transmission and use of electrical energy, 11 of which proved fatal.

Indian Territorial Force.

529. The report submitted by the Auxiliary and Territorial Forces Committee on the re-organisation of the Indian Territorial Force was under consideration of the Government of India during the year under review.

APPENDIX I.

His Excellency the Governor's Speech in the Council on the 17th May, 1926, regarding the Calcutta riots and the Presidency Area (Emergency) Bill.

GENTLEMEN—I have summoned you at short notice and at an unusual season to discuss an emergency measure which will be the sole business of this special session and to hear from the Government an explanation of the circumstances which have rendered this measure necessary. I have come to address you in person because the powers which we are asking you to entrust to the Executive are such as can only be justified by very exceptional circumstances and you are entitled to hear on the authority of the head of the Government what those circumstances are. The events which have taken place in Calcutta during the last six weeks must be so fresh in the minds of all of you as to need no reminder from me, but I am obliged to review them briefly in order to justify the action which the Government has taken and is now taking to deal with the situation. There has been much discussion, both private and public, of those events—that was natural enough—much criticism of the Government both for what it did and for what it left undone—that too perhaps was equally to be expected, but up to now there has been no justification of the measures we have taken. We have been obliged to keep silent as we have been too much occupied in restoring order to concern ourselves with answering criticisms. But we have a right to be heard and you too are entitled to hear the case of the Government before you express your opinions upon the Bill which you have met to consider.

Let me remind you of the criticisms which have been brought against us.

First we were accused of having failed to anticipate the riots which broke out in Calcutta at the beginning of April or to appreciate their gravity.

Next we were blamed for not having used the military forces at our disposal more effectively in the early days. Men, who would have been the first to denounce us as butchers if we had done what they now suggest, have not hesitated to tell us that if we had ordered more firing and killed more people at the beginning we should have been spared the later phases of the riots and that there would have been a saving of life in the long run.

Then because the majority of the police are Hindus, Muhammadan critics have felt justified in making a general accusation against them of partiality and even of aiding and abetting their co-religionists in looting Muhammadan property.

Then we were blamed for sharing the view of every one of our critics that the trouble was at an end when all rioting had ceased and for not having foreseen the recrudescence of rioting which started with a drunken quarrel on April 22.

In this second phase we were blamed for not using the military at all and for having failed to prevent the commission of a number of assaults upon private individuals.

Taking the two periods together we have been told that we have shown indifference and incompetence, that we have not used the powers we already possess to get rid of bad characters and that to cover up our own sins of omission we are now asking for new and wholly unnecessary powers when it is too late for them to be of any use in the present emergency, but which may be put to an improper use in the future in connexion with political agitation of trade disputes.

That is the case we have to meet and we shall do our best to meet it, for we realise that if you believe such charges to be well-founded you will certainly not feel disposed to entrust us with greater responsibilities and provide us with more effective means of dealing with future emergencies.

Now let me recall to you the circumstances which have given rise to these criticisms and endeavour to meet them. The riots started on Friday, April 2. There had been evidence all over India of growing tension between the two communities but there had been no previous indication that Calcutta was likely to be the battle ground. The first incident was a riot between the Muhammadans and the Hindus over an Arya Samaj procession. This is not the time nor the place to discuss the question of who were the actual aggressors on that particular occasion. The local police force dealt with the riot and suppressed it, and at the end of that day it was hoped that the outburst would be localised. On the following morning, however, the tension led to further riots and was intensified by attacks on mosques and temples. The area over which the disturbances spread used up all the police reserves and it became necessary to call out the military. In the next few days there were actually very few occasions on which it was necessary to disperse the mob. The disturbances took the form of looting and isolated assaults; the unruly element almost immediately dispersed as soon as the police or the military appeared. There was absolutely no justification either in the

first or the second phase of the riots for any greater demonstration of military force; indiscriminate shooting of innocent people, because of the lawless acts of a few, would have been a crime. I entirely approve the discretion and restraint displayed by those on the spot in circumstances of great difficulty and the criticism that our action was not more drastic in those first days is perhaps the highest praise that can be bestowed upon the Commissioner of Police and those in authority under him. The thanks of the Government and of the citizens of Calcutta are also due to the military authorities who placed their troops so readily at the disposal of the civil power and who allowed them to remain on mere police duty some time after all actual rioting had ceased in order to restore confidence. This confidence would probably have come at an earlier date but for the fact that a Hindu and a Muhammadan festival occurred on April 13 and 14, respectively, and led to a great uneasiness on the part of both communities. After these festivals had passed off quietly business resumed its normal course and there was no apparent reason to anticipate any recurrence of these disturbances, then, but not till then, the troops were withdrawn, but police pickets were still kept on the streets.

With regard to the charges brought against the Hindu police in the first riots I have only this to say that every well-supported accusation will be fully investigated and this would have been done by this time, had not the later riots intervened and occupied the whole time of the Commissioner of Police. I cannot, of course, claim that every member of the Police Force is able to shed all human sympathies and emotions when he joins the force, or deny that individual constables may have allowed their sympathy with their co-religionists to interfere with their duty. In fact four constables have been dismissed from the force for having taken part in the looting of Muhammadan property. There will be no screening of individuals who are proved to have failed in their duty. But with policemen as with soldiers we do claim that the discipline of their service is sufficient to protect them from a general suspicion of partiality, and I do not admit that the discipline of the whole force was found wanting in the recent riots. I cannot too strongly deprecate the general and unsupported charges which have been made and which only tend to accentuate communal bitterness. Charges of the gravest character have, in fact, been submitted to me in writing unsupported by evidence which can be tested, and based on no more authority than such vague phrases as "if my information is correct," "I am told," "it is said," "a Muhammadan student reports," etc. If Hindu police officers are to be mistrusted by Muhammadans

and Muhammadan officers are to be mistrusted by Hindus, the only conclusion we should be forced to is that Indian police cannot be employed to keep order in India—a conclusion which I absolutely refuse to accept.

Within a week of the withdrawal of the military the disorder broke out again without any sort of adequate cause. The police adopted the same tactics as before, picketing the main roads and crossings and employing a regular system of motor and foot patrols. Although there were clashes of mobs of the two communities the police were competent to disperse them. There was no organised disturbance such as to necessitate the assistance of a military force beyond the armoured cars. There was only one occasion of serious firing when an armoured car was attacked and there was no justification for the declaration of martial law or for the use of a military force to deal with the disturbance. An ugly feature of these second riots was a series of brutal and cowardly murders of individuals and no amount of military force could have prevented these.

These murders were rendered possible by the existence in the city of a class of hooligans belonging to both communities to whom violent crime was not abhorrent. To the *goonda* element which exists in the city at all times and which the police are engaged in clearing out by the slow but effective provisions of the Goonda Act a new element has recently been added, arising in the first instance out of the growing tension between the Hindu and Moslem communities and accentuated by the panic created by the first riots. Both sides have imported men from up-country both for their individual protection and for the strengthening of their communal forces. That has been the chief cause of the recent riots and that still constitutes the chief menace to the peace of Calcutta. So long as that element remains, there can be no tranquility. If it is not quickly removed, it will go on increasing. If individuals are allowed to surround themselves with unauthorised guardians and if the commission of one outrage is to be claimed as justification for the commission of another by way of retaliation, then the authorised guardians of the law cannot be responsible for maintaining order. The problem, therefore, before us is how are we most effectively to rid Calcutta of this dangerous element imported from up-country, and arm the regular police force of the city with sufficient powers to protect the lives and property of defenceless citizens. The demand that citizens should be allowed to arm themselves and become responsible for their own defence leads straight to the conditions of the jungle and the issue before you, therefore, is between the rule of law by which civilised communities are governed or the rule of claw by which

the beasts preserve their lives. This brings me to the last criticism we have to meet and the case for the Bill you have met to discuss.

The charge is that we have already the power to deal with these imported hooligans that we have not used them and that if we used them vigorously there would be no need for the summary powers we are asking for. The charge is based on ignorance both of the problem and of the existing law. The problem is not merely a *goonda* problem and it cannot be solved by the application of the Goonda Act alone. The criminal element in Calcutta known as *goonda* has figured in the recent riots but, as I have already pointed out, the danger from that element has been greatly increased by the recent importation of what I can only describe as unauthorised guardians or communal champions. Many of these men are not *goondas* at all but their presence is a menace to the peace of the city and many of them have taken part in the recent outrages. There is no provision of the existing law by which we can get rid of them and in times of rioting their presence greatly increases the danger of disorder. If this Bill is passed it will be possible for us to deal with this new danger and thereby lessen the chances of a fresh outbreak. But remember that the powers of the Bill are limited to a state of emergency and in no way affect the normal establishment of *durwans* or men from other parts of India who have a legitimate occupation in Calcutta. It is generally agreed that the recent disturbers of the peace did not belong to the normal population of Calcutta but were strangers in our midst. We have already arrested a large number of those persons against whom this Bill is directed and have induced most of them to leave Calcutta. If the Bill is not passed, there will be nothing to prevent the return of these bad characters and those now in custody will have to be released.

There are some who think that all is now quiet, that the danger is past, and that as the powers of the Government to bring about peace were sufficient, there is no need for the powers we are asking for. It was only the knowledge that we intended to ask for these powers, it was only the belief that they would be given to us, that have enabled us to secure the degree of tranquility which we have reached. Let me explain.

In spite of the great strain on the police during the last few weeks and the increased picketing of the streets which they have had to undertake, they have systematically raided the known haunts of the criminal class. They have arrested not only *goondas* against whom orders under the Goonda Act can, in due course, be executed, but many others whom they had reason to suspect had come to Calcutta recently for no worthy purpose. Being powerless to deal with such men after their arrest the police

applied to the Government for the special powers which we are now asking you to provide in this Bill. In the belief that these would be granted the campaign against the hooligans has been continued up to now and a large number of them who could not be dealt with under the Goonda Act were persuaded to leave Calcutta before the new powers came into existence, while a still larger number of the smaller fry left Calcutta in apprehension that measures were being taken against them. Unless this Bill becomes law there is nothing to prevent those men returning, and if they do return the police have no means of dealing with them. In addition to those who have left there still remains in Calcutta a large number of such men who cannot be dealt with effectively under the Goonda Act and who, though at present disorganised, constitute a very real danger in the event of any further recrudescence of the disturbances.

Such is the case for the Bill which you have been summoned to consider. It is for you to say how far the emergency is sufficiently serious to justify the remedy and how far the remedy is adequate to meet the emergency. Since I came to Calcutta I have had many personal interviews with men of all political parties, both Hindu and Muhammadan; every one of them has described the imported hooligan element as responsible for the recent troubles and every one has begged me to arm Government with the necessary powers to deal with it. There was an absolute consensus of opinion on this matter while public anxiety still prevailed, and I beg you, now that that anxiety has for the moment been relieved, not to misjudge the situation and not to be lulled into a false sense of security. You owe the present quiet to the expectation of this Bill. It can only be maintained and increased by the passage of this Bill. If you reject it you will be depriving yourselves of the only guarantee against a recurrence of the ugly scenes which have recently brought so grievous a reproach upon the fair name of this great city.

I have only one more word to say in conclusion. You may accept everything I have said so far, you may admit the evil, approve the diagnosis and acknowledge the suitability of the remedy and yet hesitate to arm the Executive with the powers we are asking for, unless we can satisfy you that having secured them for one purpose they will not be used for another. It is therefore incumbent upon us to show that we have limited the use of these emergency powers to an emergency to which they are applicable.

First, then, I would ask you to note that we are not asking for permanent powers to be used in normal times, but only for use in an emergency which is limited to three months. Although therefore the powers will be exercised by the Commissioner of

Police, they cannot be so exercised whenever he pleases but only with the authority of the Government after the latter has declared an emergency to exist and has published the reasons for such a declaration. Even then every order which he issues is subject to the control of the Government. It is a mistake therefore to describe these as powers given to the police, they are in fact powers given to the local Government. There is a complete safeguard that the powers of the Bill shall only be used in an emergency.

The decision as to whether or not an emergency exists is of necessity left to the Executive since it is essentially an executive responsibility. Lest any one should be afraid that these powers may be abused, I would point out that in Bombay the police have been empowered by Section 27 of the City of Bombay Police Act, 1902, not merely in an emergency but at any time, to remove persons whose presence in the town causes or is thought likely to cause danger or alarm—a more general power than we are asking for here, and one which has been in force for the last 24 years, without any suggestion that it has ever been abused. In this case fortunately, no political considerations are involved, nor does this Bill raise any communal issues. It will be possible therefore, I hope, for you to discuss it without any heat or prejudice. The safety and tranquillity of Calcutta is the only issue and I trust that you will debate it with a due sense of responsibility. I now leave that issue in your hands in the confident expectation that you will give to it the careful attention which the importance of the subject deserves and that your decision will reflect the calm judgment of responsible citizens.

APPENDIX II.

GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL.

POLITICAL DEPARTMENT.

Resolution No. 5721 P., dated the 5th June, 1926.

It is only in recent years that the controversy about music before mosques has become important in Calcutta. This subject is now attracting a great deal of attention and in fact it was the immediate occasion of the disturbances in April 1926. On the 17th May His Excellency the Governor convened a conference of leaders and endeavoured unsuccessfully to arrive at a conclusion which would be acceptable to both the Hindu and Muhammadan communities. In dissolving the conference His Excellency expressed a hope that the two communities would after mutual

discussion be able to agree and inform him of their agreement. This hope has not been fulfilled. In matters of religion Government maintain an attitude of strict neutrality and only intervene when the claims of one community clash with those of another, and when the persistence in mutually incompatible claims threatens to endanger public peace. Such a situation now exists, and it is necessary, therefore, for the Government of Bengal to announce with as much detail as the circumstances of the case permit, the nature of the orders which will hereafter be enforced in Calcutta in this respect.

2. The authority of the Commissioner of Police for regulating music at processions in Calcutta is derived from two sections of the Calcutta Police Act, 1866, *viz.*, 62 and 62A, and there is a distinction between the nature of his powers under these two sections. Section 62 authorises the Commissioner of Police to make rules on the subject. These rules require the previous sanction of Government and they must be published for criticism before they are finally issued. The general conditions which are prescribed in the printed license issued by the Commissioner of Police are in accordance with the terms of these statutory rules, and the conditions relating to the subject of music are as follows: "All music shall cease in the neighbourhood of hospitals and all churches, mosques, temples or other places of worship during the time of public worship." The rules at present in force under section 62 were published by the Commissioner of Police in a notification, dated 2nd March 1922, with the previous sanction of Government and the conditions which appear on the license form for processions are embodied in these rules. They were published for public criticism in the *Gazette* of 4th January 1922, and no objection or criticism was received. The occasion for republishing the rules in 1922 was a general revision and a consolidation of rules under section 62. At that time the rules relating to music at processions were not a subject of special consideration and in fact no alteration was made in the rules on this subject existing at the time, which had been similarly notified on the 31st December 1911 after approval by Government and after previous publication for criticism on the 18th October 1911. On that occasion also no criticism was received. In 1904 the Commissioner of Police had submitted rules containing the same condition about music with the remark that this and the other conditions had been entered in the licenses for many years but that it had been noticed that sanction of Government had not been obtained. In 1905 the conditions were sanctioned by Government.

3. The Commissioner of Police has further powers under section 62A. Under that section the Commissioner and, subject

to his orders, every police officer of rank not inferior to that of Sub-Inspector, may give all such direction, either orally or in writing, as he may consider necessary for certain purposes which include the securing of the orderly conduct of persons constituting processions and the regulation and control of music. Two conditions are attached to the exercise of these powers. They must be exercised with a view to securing the public safety or convenience, and the orders issued must not contravene any rule made under section 62 or the provisions of any license granted under such a rule. Therefore in no circumstances may the Commissioner or one of his subordinate officers permit the playing of music near a place of worship during the time of public worship because this would be in contravention of the condition in the license quoted above, but at all times they have the fullest discretion to impose any restriction with a view to securing the public safety and convenience.

4. It was arranged at the Conference on the 17th May that written statements regarding the personal experiences of those who are acquainted with this subject should be received and considered by Government. A large number of statements has been received, and they have been carefully considered. The Hindu community claim that music is an essential part of their religious observances and is therefore a necessary feature at all their religious processions. They have claimed the right and asserted the practice of playing music before mosques without hindrance at all hours of the day. The Muhammadan community consider that music disturbs the devotions of those who are at prayer in mosques, and they claim the right and assert the practice of the stoppage of music before mosques at all hours of the day, and not only on the occasions of public worship. There is, therefore, a definite conflict of statements as to the actual practice in the past, and it is clear to Government that this conflict is largely due to the fact that until very recently the subject has not attracted much attention in Calcutta and the two communities have generally been prepared to accommodate one another. These conditions no longer prevail and circumstances have arisen which make it necessary for Government in fulfilment of their responsibility for the preservation of the peace to arrange for a clearer definition of the instructions which will in future be observed by those conducting processions in Calcutta.

5. The terms of the license will remain unaltered, but in order to prevent uncertainty, it will be necessary in all doubtful cases for the Commissioner of Police to ascertain and lay down for the guidance of those conducting the procession what are the

hours of public worship. Government interpret the words "public worship" as meaning "recognised congregational worship" and are not prepared to admit a claim which has been put forward that the time of public worship extends throughout the day. In the case of mosques the hours of the five recognised Muhammadan prayers will be specified. In other respects the Commissioner will, according to law, be guided by the requirements of the public peace and convenience with due regard to established practice in all cases. It has not been established to the satisfaction of Government that the general practice has gone beyond the terms of the license. At the same time the Commissioner of Police will retain the fullest discretion to secure compliance with such orders as he may give in accordance with the law. If, however, a particular procession exercises its privileges in a manner which is calculated to give offence, that procession and others will incur the risk of having privileges curtailed in future. On the other hand, Government do not intend that such restrictions as may be imposed on those conducting Hindu processions shall be extended on account of the demand made by Muhammadans for the imposition of further restrictions.

6. Government have given special consideration to the case of the Nakhoda Mosque in Chitpore Road and have decided that in consequence of its size, importance and situation, an exception to the general rule will be made in the case of this mosque, and that all processions passing it at any time of the day will, when doing so, be required to stop their music.

7. These orders relate only to Calcutta: in other places different conditions have resulted in the establishment of different practices and such practices will not be modified as a result of these orders.

8. The existence of this dissension is a matter of serious concern to the Government of Bengal: it is in their opinion damaging to the reputation of the people of Calcutta for good citizenship, and it is the earnest wish of His Excellency in Council that at an early date the two communities will show greater readiness to meet one another's wishes and will thereby restore the amicable relations which until quite recently have subsisted between them.

By order of the Governor in Council,

L. BIRLEY,

Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal.

APPENDIX III.

GOVERNMENT OF BENGAL.

COMMUNIQUE.

Dated the 19th January 1927.

Conflicting accounts of the situation at Patuakhali having appeared in the public press, the Governor in Council has decided to issue a statement of the facts of the case and the orders issued in connection therewith.

2. Patuakhali is in a locality in which there is a large preponderance of Muhammadans over the Hindus, the proportion being about 5 to 1 in the subdivision and the revenue thana, and about 4 to 1 in the headquarters police station. In the Municipality, however, the communities are almost equal in numbers. In the past there are no records of any disputes on the subject of music before mosques, and the Governor in Council is satisfied that in the area affected by the present dispute there was a long standing and well recognised practice under which Hindu processions out of regard for the feelings of the Muhammadans, when passing along the District Board road on the south side of which there is a mosque, stopped music for a distance of about 80 yards between the west end of the Civil Court compound and a culvert.

3. Originally there was only one mosque in the locality, a building situated on the south of the District Board road and some 7 yards from it. Subsequently, however, about the year 1911 the Muhammadans erected a new mosque on the north of the Municipal lane running from the District Board road along the edge of the Civil Court compound and about 30 yards from the junction of the lane and the District Board road. The new mosque is now used for congregational prayers and the old mosque for private prayer. After the erection of the new mosque the Muhammadans tried to get the area within which Hindu processions stopped all music extended 45 yards towards the east to the point where the main approach to the Civil Court takes off from the District Board road, and there seem to have been some negotiations between the two communities on the subject but there is no evidence that the practice of stopping music in this extended area was ever generally recognised.

4. Latterly as the result of the forces operating in the Indian Moslem world the local Muhammadans began, among other things, to object to attending the festivities connected with certain Hindu festivals and to oppose the performance by Hindus of certain

ceremonies in certain places of which the Saraswati Puja in schools was probably the most prominent. This led to trouble at the Latif Seminary and elsewhere but no serious ebullition occurred until after the riots in Calcutta in April 1926. The excitement which these engendered increased the irritation which this attitude of the Muhammadans had caused among the Hindus and the prominence given in Calcutta to the question of music before mosques led the Hindus on the 13th of May 1926 deliberately to organise a procession with music along the District Board road near the mosques in defiance of the recognised practice. There was no religious festival at the time and the object was merely to annoy the Muhammadans in which object they succeeded. The Subdivisional Officer, however, formed a Conciliation Committee and further trouble was avoided.

5. A month later at the time of the Bakr-Id fresh trouble occurred owing to the Muhammadans performing their sacrifice in the open without making any attempt to screen the ceremony from the Hindus in the neighbourhood. In retaliation and in defiance of the recognised practice, the Hindus took a procession along the District Board road near the mosques at the time of evening prayer and a serious riot was only averted by the efforts of the local officials and certain Hindu leaders. The situation was so serious that the District Magistrate had to go to Patuakhali and issue an order under section 144, Criminal Procedure Code, forbidding all public meetings and processions for fifteen days and to post an additional force of armed police in the locality. It was about this time that Babu Satindra Nath Sen arrived from Barisal with a party of Hindu volunteers to take charge of the Hindu activities. He and other Hindu leaders approached the District Magistrate to have the order under section 144, Criminal Procedure Code, withdrawn, and each side having, after some discussion, agreed to refrain from any action that was likely to annoy the other for at least a fortnight the District Magistrate withdrew his order under section 144, Criminal Procedure Code, and removed the additional police.

6. At this time it was not denied by the Hindus that there was a long standing and well recognised practice of stopping music on the District Board road near the mosques; the only point in dispute was the eastern limit of the area within which music was not played.

7. For the next two months conferences were held between the two parties and the Muharram passed without trouble, but no settlement was arrived at as Babu Satindra Nath Sen now raised the general question of right and would concede nothing further than that non-religious processions such as marriage processions should stop music before the principal mosque. Ultimately this leader

announced that if no agreement was reached by a certain date he would lead a procession over the disputed area. As such action, if allowed, would inevitably have had very serious consequences orders were issued under section 30 (*2*) of the Police Act (V of 1861) requiring all persons directing or promoting processions in Patuakhali town to apply for a license. In addition extra police were sent down to Patuakhali and every effort was made by the local officers to procure an agreement.

8. Finally on the 30th August 1926 Babu Satindra Nath Sen took out a procession under license but violated the terms of the license which provided *inter alia* that following the lines of the previous arrangement between the two communities no music should be played between the Municipal lane at the west end of the Civil Court compound and the culvert. As a result of this procession some arrests were made and some stone-throwing took place, whereupon the Assistant Superintendent of Police who was in charge extended the area, in which according to the terms of the license issued under section 30 (*3*), Police Act (V of 1861), music was prohibited, to the path leading to the Civil Court so as to remove the place of arrest from the proximity of the new mosque. This was done solely in the interests of public peace and not with the idea of supporting the Muhammadan claim over the additional area. Since then there have been daily processions under license, daily breaches of the conditions of the license and daily arrests and prosecutions under section 32, Police Act. In every case the sentence has been one of fine, imprisonment being ordered only in default of payment of the fine.

9. From time to time there have been various attempts at a settlement. One proposal made by some Hindu leaders that orders similar to those in force in Calcutta should be passed by Government for Patuakhali was rejected as being contrary to the declared policy of Government to maintain the existing practice in the mufassal. Another by some of the moderate local Hindus, which slightly modified the original understanding and would allow four religious processions and all funeral processions to pass the mosque with music save at prayer time only, all other processions being forbidden to play music at any time before the mosque, was rejected by the Hindu extremists. On the 19th November the District Magistrate persuaded both parties to refer the matter in dispute to a board of arbitration consisting of two Hindus from the Hindu Maha Sabha and two Muhammadans from the Jaiyat-e-Ulema with power to co-opt a fifth member as Chairman, but the same day Babu Satindra Nath Sen was himself arrested for taking part in a procession which broke the terms of the license. As the result of this, the District Magistrate was approached at Barisal by some

Hindu leaders and asked, in the interest of the proposed settlement, to perform an " act of clemency " and withdraw the case against Babu Satindra Nath Sen, and those arrested with him, which he finally agreed to do. Now the District Magistrate awaits the outcome of the proposal to submit the matters in dispute to a board of arbitration.

10. The Governor in Council again invites attention to the policy announced in his communiqué, dated the 5th June 1926, *viz.*, " In the mufassal Magistrates and police officers will continue to regulate processions under the Police Act in accordance with the practice which prevails in the locality concerned ". He is satisfied that there is a long established and well recognised practice in Patuakhali that music was stopped in deference to Muhammadan sentiments by all processions between the limits specified in paragraph 2 above and he has therefore issued instructions to the local officers to regulate processions under the Police Act in accordance with that practice. The Governor in Council would welcome any agreement freely and voluntarily arrived at between the leaders of the two communities which would render unnecessary the present measures for maintaining the public peace. He regards with abhorrence the present state of affairs in which so many boys and youths under a mistaken sense of loyalty to their religion persist in breaking the law and in going to jail, and he has already issued orders for the release of all who are willing to apologise for their conduct and give their word of honour not to repeat it if released or whose parents or guardians are willing to give an undertaking on their behalf. Up to date 45 persons have been released under these orders. But he is not prepared as a concession to such misdirected loyalty and self-sacrifice to modify his policy already announced for dealing with such disputes in the mufassal and he trusts that the leaders of the Hindu community will recognise this and persuade their followers to cease from defying the law and if they desire to depart from the previous practice will have recourse to negotiation or arbitration or if all else fails to the Civil Courts.

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